

THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST

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"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has, even to subject all things to Himself."

"... so stand firm in the Lord."

"Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men."

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

*"Finally brethren,
 whatever is true,
 whatever is honorable,
whatever is right,
 whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely,
 whatever is of good repute,
if there is any excellence
 and if anything worthy of praise,
let your mind dwell on these things."*

- The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians

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PREFACE

Why Choose This Title and Topic?

In the spring and early summer of 2004, I became increasingly intrigued by the seemingly self-contained enigma of Revelation 17:7-11.

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

I worked with these five verses over the next nine years. In the book that follows, you will find not only a new interpretation of these verses but also its implication for other biblical prophetic texts. These Biblical passages, when considered in their context, identify the Antichrist from his earliest deeds, his place in the changing structure of the world's future governing authority, and his final rise to complete religious and ruling power on earth.

What Is Not In This Book?

While we are curious to know when these momentous prophetic events are to begin, the Scriptures seem to ignore our curiosity. Instead, the Bible consistently focuses on *the what*. Of the two, *when*

and *what*, the most important, of course, is *what*. If we know *what* will happen in the future *when* becomes unnecessary. If the prophesied events have not happened, the Scriptures' answer to the question of *when* seems to be 'not yet.' If these events are already happening, the answer is 'now.' This seems to be as far as the Scriptures are willing to satisfy our desire to know *when*.

Yet many have attempted to identify specific dates when prophetic events are to occur. Some have relied upon supposed 'codes' found among the letters that make up the biblical message. Others have tried to tie the unfolding of future prophecies to key dates or events in recent history. Still others, have predicted the start of the prophetic end by calculations of 'significant' numbers. Among the many flaws in these methods is a lack of reliance upon the biblical authors' intended message.

The Scriptures are a precious treasure preserved for us by God through real persecution and suffering. They were never intended to be a database of letters that could be sifted and repeatedly aligned until something of assumed coherence 'pops up.' Such 'findings' could also be achieved by sifting and aligning the works of Shakespeare or any other large grouping of words.

The method used when handling the Bible must be based upon what the authors thought they were saying. While the Divine author of Scripture may have intended some words to bear more meaning than the human authors were aware, this Divinely intended message is found to be complementary, not contrary, to the intent of the human hand that wrote it. Some may disagree with what I believe the authors of Scripture were intending to say, but I trust we can agree that the principle of authorial intent is the necessary foundation for biblical interpretation.

Since the authors of Scripture did not indicate at what date these future events would begin, we sacrifice credibility by going past such omissions to create 'start times' of our own. The prophetic authors did specify that certain events would occur with or near other future key events. But no specific date is given for any of them. Every reader must be content to understand the prophecy as accurately as possible

while waiting for these key events to occur in the course of history. Readers looking for dates in history when these prophetic events will occur will be disappointed. There are no specific dates or 'Bible codes' in this book.

Who Helped Make this Book Possible?

I am greatly indebted to Fred Plastow. His passion, insatiable curiosity and keen intellect were all brought to bear when he graciously agreed to review a rather impenetrable very rough early draft. His 20 pages of observations and suggestions helped lay the groundwork for this book's current format. His contribution was crucial to this project moving forward.

I am also very thankful for David Hudson's thorough review and many suggestions. Being a gifted writer, David patiently tried to show me how to say things simply (often in vain, I'm afraid). I truly wish I could better emulate my son's clear effortless style.

The book's cover was designed by my brother, Lane Hudson. It is now much more visually appealing and easier to read. He also made very helpful suggestions concerning the format of the book's interior layout.

The greatest contribution came from my wife, Bev, who helped in many ways large and small. With surprising enthusiasm, she took up the thankless and painstaking task of proofreading the final draft, usually after having spent many long stressful hours at work. Without her help and encouragement, this book would not exist.

Additional introductory issues are addressed in the [EXPANDED PREFACE](#), but they can wait. Feel free to skip them for now.

INTRODUCTION

The Bible is clear. Life on earth will be better than we can possibly hope or imagine, but not before it gets far worse than ever before. Nearly every living thing on earth will die. People, plants, and animals will die in unimaginable numbers. Blow after blow will rain down on the planet killing almost everything. Then, just as it teeters on the edge of complete lifelessness, the earth will be reborn. Wastelands and deserts will thrive, the ruined places will be rebuilt and earth will know its golden age.

But why will things become so horrible? What will make God so angry that he destroys almost all life? The rapid near extinction will be God's judgment on a world at war with him and his followers. It is his response to those who will be rejecting him, worshiping another, and killing his own. The world will be worshiping a man who believes he is god. While he has many names in the Bible, we will call him the Antichrist. [\[3 \]](#)

Although initially blocked by those already holding power, the Antichrist's incredible display of supernatural ability will dissolve their opposition allowing him to eventually become the most powerful ruler on earth. He will be heralded as the long-awaited savior, come to usher in a new era of self-discovery, enlightenment and peace.

The changes he brings, however, must be accepted by everyone. Those who reject his message will be regarded as the 'unbelievers.' Their continued resistance will be a barrier to the fulfillment he promises. The Antichrist will institute specific measures on a global scale to identify, marginalize and eliminate this group.

The Antichrist and his followers will wipe out nearly everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ. However, God will ultimately demonstrate the absurdity of the Antichrist's divine claims as he brings crushing devastation that this false god will be powerless to prevent. The anticipation and hopes of God's followers will then be realized. The long-promised age of harmony, peace and righteousness

will truly begin when Jesus Christ finally begins his reign on the earth.

Our goal in this book is to expose the Antichrist and our strategy has two parts. First, we will look at the specific actions and events he will fulfill as found in the Bible's prophecies. Second, we seek to begin a discussion among those committed to the authority of the Bible about our interpretation of these prophetic texts. To do this we will spend some time examining the method used to find such specific future events in the prophecies of these times. If successful, this discussion will add these findings to the collection of biblical teaching that our generation will seek to pass along to others.

By doing this we hope to both warn and encourage humanity during the future reign of terror. Those who may be tempted to avoid the terrible cost of remaining faithful to Jesus need to consider that the Bible promises an even worse fate for those who pledge themselves to obey and worship the Antichrist. In the time of the Antichrist, truth will be unwelcomed and punished. Deception, false signs, and wonders will accompany the lies of the Antichrist. Prophecies about these times will warn those tempted to take part in that deceit and encourage those who have determined to worship none other than the true God. Those who remain faithful to Jesus the Messiah will be called upon to demonstrate that commitment under severe trials. Those committed to Jesus during the worst time the world will ever know, have a bright and wonderful future that cannot be taken from them, if they remain faithful to the end.

The prophecies about this future time are remarkably specific and startling. God gives detailed prophecies about the future to demonstrate his absolute control over the course and destiny of history. Nothing can prevent the awful things the Antichrist will do and what will happen as a result. Since he will seem to be god in human form there may be some who will pledge themselves to the Antichrist and his wonderful sounding message without realizing that he actually is the enemy of God. We seek to warn them before they make a decision they cannot undo, one that forever keeps them from Christ.

To this end, a proposed scenario of events is offered to the reader. This

scenario is composed of seven paragraphs. Each paragraph can be found immediately before the chapters that support them. Taken together, they present the key events and conditions involving the Antichrist's rise to power.

Some may think this is strange, writing a book that is not practical now but hopefully will be at some future time, for people who may not be currently listening. However, the church has always had two primary responsibilities regarding the Bible's message. The first is to understand its message as accurately as possible, even those portions that do not seem to involve us. The second is to pass our understanding of the Bible along to those generations that will come. Since we do not know whether these terrible events will occur very soon or in the far distant future, there might be people alive today who will find themselves living through these times. The Bible's message will be their only reliable guide as they experience the rise of the Antichrist.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FUTURE EMPIRE OF 10 REGIONS AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Ten regional powers decide to unite. Each region may contain many former nations. Just as many nations may form one region, these ten regions will also combine their power into one confederation with a loose coordinating central authority. This alliance has deep roots linking it geographically with the long dormant Roman Empire. Each individual region is a potent power, but when united they are a dominant presence. The alliance creates the office of a supreme executive to coordinate the actions of all ten members. Each of the ten regions is to supply a leader who will serve as the supreme executive for a fixed term. At the conclusion of each term, the authority of the supreme executive is to pass to a representative from another region. The plan, therefore, allows for ten terms, with each regional power providing leadership for only one term.

We start in the Old Testament book of Daniel. The prophet Daniel was an exceptionally gifted, accomplished, godly man. Over the course of his long life, his integrity and faithfulness were rewarded with visions from heaven, prophetic dreams, even visits from angels. Together, these prophecies reveal what will happen to the Jewish people from Daniel's time onward until God establishes a kingdom on earth that will never end, personally ruled by the Messiah. Basically, the prophecies in the Book of Daniel provide a roadmap for the direction history has gone, and will continue to go.

It was revealed to Daniel on several occasions that he was living during the first of 4 great empires that would follow each other and rule over his people. The earthly rule of God himself follows the 4th

world empire, removing all previously ruling power.

In the 7th chapter of the book, Daniel sees a vision at night where each of these 4 world empires is represented as a powerful creature. The Babylonian Empire of Daniel's own time is represented as a lion with wings like an eagle. Next came the Medo-Persian Empire, shown as a ravenous bear. The 3rd empire was Greece which is portrayed as a leopard with four wings and four heads. The 4th and final empire is unlike any of the first three. It is so different that instead of being compared to a creature it is called a "*beast*" with iron teeth. History tells us that the Roman Empire grew up around the remnants of the Greek powers.

The Unfulfilled Prophecies in Daniel Concern the Last Empire

The main emphasis of Daniel chapter 7 is on this last great worldwide empire. Yet there are conditions and actions associated with this 4th empire that are not known to history. From Daniel's point of view, all of these prophecies were about the future. Today, most have already come about and can be seen clearly in the historic past, but not all. The first three empires have come and gone. This 4th empire has ruled the earth, but there are events carefully presented to us in Daniel 7 that have not occurred yet. These unfulfilled prophecies involve the last stages of the last players on the world scene.

The remarkably detailed prophecies involving the first three empires do not contradict the history of those times. In fact, there is a remarkably precise fit between the prophecy and the history of these three empires. The stunning accuracy found in Daniel's previously fulfilled prophecies provides credibility. If the earlier prophecies were so accurate in how they came to fulfillment, we should expect the same accuracy for those prophetic events that have not occurred yet.

[4]

There Is Still a Future Role for the Roman Empire

Since the book of Daniel contains many crucial prophecies that have not happened, we know that there must be a future history where these prophecies reach fulfillment, since prophecy comes ultimately from history's Author and Director. So, those activities which the

Roman Empire did not fulfill in its past, must occur in the future.

The images we will find in some of Daniel's prophecies can seem strange. Yet, these are highly significant prophecies concerning the structure of this last world empire and the Antichrist's arrival on the prophetic scene. Their bizarre nature may seem to hide their true significance. However, once we become acclimated to these prophetic statements, their importance will begin to emerge.

The Future Roman Empire Will Have 10 Centers of Power

In Daniel 7 special attention is given to the 4th and last empire which is described three different times.

After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

Daniel 7:7

His curiosity then causes him to ask for more information. When he asks his question, Daniel describes the 4th beast for the second time.

Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet, and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head,

Daniel 7:19-20a

As an angel answers Daniel, he provides a final description of the 4th beast.

Thus he said: "The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise."

Daniel 7:23-24a

So significant is this 4th beast, especially in its final form, that it is described three separate times.

The seemingly strange symbolism of “horns” is explained by the angel as representing 10 kings. A “horn” represents kingship and presumably a kingdom. We will certainly be looking at this passage quite carefully further on, but we have already learned something important. The final form of the 4th world Gentile power will have 10 kings or rulers.

The Beast in Revelation 13 is the 4th Beast from Daniel 7

We will come back to Daniel 7. We have only just started to examine the amazing prophecies found there. But the significant prophecies in Daniel 7 are also described in other biblical passages. Each time the prophecies of these times are given additional details are also provided. To have the full picture we need to combine their details.

Chapter 13 of the book of Revelation also describes the activities of a beast. As we will see, the beast of Rev 13:1-10 is the very same beast Daniel described three times in his vision. The beast of Rev 13:1-10 and the 4th beast of Daniel 7 share six unique features. The presence of these 6 common elements demonstrates that the same future form of the last Gentile power is being described in these two passages.

Comparisons to a Leopard, Lion, and Bear

The first element connecting Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 involves animals.

And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.

Revelation 13:2

And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. ... And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. ... After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird.

Daniel 7:3-4, 5, 6

In Daniel 7 the first three world empires were compared to a lion, a bear, and a leopard, in that order. The beast in Rev 13:1-10 is described using the same three animals, but their order is reversed.

The use of the same three animals in both passages is the first of six elements forming a strong literary bond.

The Ten Horns

The beasts in Daniel 7 and Rev 13:1-10 both have 10 horns.

And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns.

Revelation 13:1

and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong ... and it had ten horns.

Daniel 7:7

Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast ... and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head

Daniel 7:19, 20

The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth ... As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise.

Daniel 7:23, 24

Obviously, most animals with horns usually have two. The fact that both Rev 13:1-10 and Daniel 7 depict beasts with 10 horns is another element connecting them together.

Great Boasting or Blasphemous Speech

The third element connecting Daniel 7 and Rev 13:1-10 is the presence of blasphemous expressions against God coming from aspects of the beast.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies ... And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

Revelation 13:5, 6

and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts. ... Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking.

Daniel 7:8, 11

... namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts

Daniel 7:20

And he will speak out against the Most High ...

Daniel 7:25

The source of these blasphemies is slightly different in the two prophecies. Rev 13:1-10 portrays the beast itself as speaking blasphemies, while Daniel 7 has the boastful words coming from an additional horn, not from the original 10. We will talk about this difference later. The emphasis here is that both Rev 13:1-10 and Daniel 7 mention elements of the beast making blasphemous statements against God.

The People of God are Overpowered

The next connecting element between Daniel 7 and Rev 13 is that the final beast will overpower the people of God.

And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Revelation 13:7

And I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them

Daniel 7:21

And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One

Daniel 7:25

The three verses above do not describe mere persecution. This beast will seek to destroy God's people and be very successful. The beast will "overcome," "overpower," and "wear down the saints."

The Beast Reigns for 42 Months or 3 ½ Years

The 5th element that connects Daniel 7 and Rev 13:1-10 is that both passages indicate the same length of time this final beast will reign.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and

blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

Revelation 13:5

And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7:25

It has been recognized that the seemingly cryptic expression “a time, times, and half a time” in Dan 7:25 is an accurate description of 3 ½ years. The word “time” refers to one year. So, a time (one year), times (two years), and half a time (½ year) totals 3 ½ years. This calculation is confirmed by the mention of 42 months in Rev 13:5. Three and one-half years and 42 months are the same length of time. Not only do both passages give a length of time this final beast will reign, this length of time is nearly identical in both prophecies.

Also, the language in both passages indicates that the time of the beast’s reign is authorized and limited by another person. In Rev 13:5 authority to act “was given to him” for 42 months. In Dan 7:25 the saints, whom he will wear down “will be given” to him for three and one-half years. The passive nature of the verbs in both passages, along with the identical length of the beast’s reign together form the 5th connection between Rev 13:1-10 and Daniel 7.

Three Rulers are Removed

The last element in common between Daniel 7 and Rev 13:1 is that 3 of the original 10 horns are removed. The two passages reflect that removal differently.

And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads

Revelation 13:1

And behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong ... and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them,

and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it.

Daniel 7:7-8

Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, ... and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, ... and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

Daniel 7:19, 20

The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth. ... As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

Daniel 7:23, 24

The 'horn' emphasizes the power of the king. A 2,000-pound bull is an impressive, intimidating mountain of power, but add a set of sharp strong horns and you have a seemingly invincible creature. His horns are the weapons he uses to protect himself and the herd. A successful king, however, needs more than just impressive weaponry. He needs the skill, daring, and cunning to use these assets to best advantage. The king needs to have a clear sharp mind. These two essential elements of kingship, the ability to project power and the ability to plan and make decisions, are represented separately in the Revelation 13 vision.

In Revelation 13 the beast has *horns* and *heads*. The horn represents the power of the king, the head represents the king's mind, his command ability. They are represented separately in Revelation 13. In Daniel 7 however, both elements are rolled into just the symbol of the horn.

There are three descriptions of the last beast in Daniel 7. In each description, 3 of the 10 horns are removed by another horn which arises after the 10. All three descriptions from Daniel display the progression from the original 10 horns to the 7 remaining horns plus another horn. However, Rev 13:1-10 does not show the removal directly. Rather, it shows the condition of the beast afterward.

This can be confusing, but it will seem less so as we become more

familiar with these symbols. Daniel's vision had 7 *horns* after 3 were removed. Revelation 13 has 7 *heads* because 3 will be removed. The symbolism of the remaining 7 horns in Daniel 7 is substituted with 7 heads in Revelation 13. While both prophecies are about the same final great empire, the message of Daniel 7 is more about the structure of this empire up to the point when the 3 horns are removed. Revelation 13's message is focused on what happens from that time going forward. The important point, for now, is that both Rev 13:1-10 and Daniel 7 show that 3 of the original 10 horns were removed.

The 7 Heads in Revelation 13 are the 7 Unconquered Regions

The 7 heads of Rev 13:1-10 represent the same things as the 7 remaining horns in Daniel 7 - those seven unconquered regions (kingdoms) in the confederation. These remaining 7 were not conquered by the other horn, which contributes to the idea that they may retain some degree of limited autonomy. They will likely still be self-governed to some degree. If so, these 7 regions would be able to implement their will regarding their natural resources, their own security and selecting their own individual rulers. The ability to choose their own path within the confederation is part of the reason their regions are illustrated as the "*heads*" of the beast in Revelation 13. They can individually decide for themselves and are each given the symbol of a head indicating they can think for themselves. [\[5 \]](#)

Why should we see these 7 regions as semi-autonomous? The answer has to do with their initial relationship with each other in the empire. Remember, the empire is first shown to have 10 kings all exercising authority at the same time. None of the 10 horns in Daniel 7 are shown to be any larger than the others at first. Therefore, none have more authority than the others at first. Since the empire consists of 10 kings who are in power at the same time, then initially each king will be somewhat separate or autonomous from the other nine. Yet the 10 kings are not completely separate. They are joined together in the empire. So, they will be somewhat autonomous and somewhat restricted (semi-autonomous).

The 10 Horns in Revelation 13 Are All 10 Regions

There are still 10 horns even after 3 are conquered, which may indicate that the potency of the regions remains but without their former rulers or “heads.” If so, these conquered regions would possibly retain some elements of their pre-conquered status, such as borders, their economic and even military abilities. But they will likely lose their limited autonomy. They will no longer be self-directed regions able to implement their individual will. These 3 regions lose control over their territory to the Antichrist. While the Antichrist controls all three regions, they are still regional in nature. The distinctiveness of the 3 regions will likely remain intact after the Antichrist conquers them.

Since the beast in Rev 13:1-10 has 10 horns *and* 7 heads we know there will still be 10 regions even after 3 are conquered. The 10 horns represent all 10 regions, while the 7 heads represent only those regions that are still able to govern themselves, that are still semi-autonomous. The beast has 10 horns, representing both the 7 semi-autonomous regions plus the 3 conquered regions now controlled by the other horn. The 7 regions that have their own individual rulers are doubly represented in Rev 13:1-10 by both heads and by horns.

The Six Elements Connecting Revelation 13:1-10 & Daniel 7

The use of a leopard, bear and lion; the depiction of the beast as having 10 horns; the expression of blasphemies by elements of the beast; the depiction of 3 of the original 10 horns being removed; the statements of the beast overpowering the people of God, and the identical length of time given for the beast’s reign, are the six points connecting the two prophetic passages. The beast of Rev 13:1-10 is the final form of the 4th beast described three times in Daniel 7.

The Beast in Revelation 17 is the Beast of Revelation 13

Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 are not the only prophetic passages about this final empire. There is a third passage Revelation 17. Each of the three passages adds to our understanding of this future time and the dynamics of that future “beast.” This third prophecy gives us additional details about the last world empire in the context of telling us about its relationship with another powerful entity - a dominant

future religion centered in a historic city.

The two chapters of Revelation 17-18 are concerned with the wickedness and judgment of the woman John describes in his vision.

And upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Revelation 17:5

Crucial additional information about the process of the Antichrist's rise to total world domination is found in Revelation 17. This chapter is primarily about the role this 'woman' plays in the last dimension of the final empire. The beast mentioned in connection with the harlot should be familiar to us:

And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:3

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns."

Revelation 17:7

The beast, who "carries" the harlot in Revelation 17 is "full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns." We can see that the beast in Revelation 17 possesses three of the same elements which connected the beast of Rev 13:1-10 with the 4th beast of Daniel 7. Both Revelation 13 and 17 speak of the beast as producing blasphemous speech and possessing 10 horns and 7 heads. Therefore, the beast of Revelation 17 is the same beast seen in Rev 13:1-10, and the same beast that was described three times in Daniel 7.

This is very important. The fourth beast that was described three times in Daniel 7 is the very same beast being referred to by the angel in Revelation 17. The importance of this connection will become clear as we move forward.

The Structure of the Beast

The beast in Daniel 7 has 10 horns. The beast in Revelation 13 and 17 has 10 horns too, but it also has 7 heads. The angel in Rev 17:10 says that the *heads* are kings. The angel in Daniel 7 said that the *horns* also represent kings. This raises an obvious question. If both *horns* and *heads* represent kings, why are both found on the beast in Revelation 13 and 17?

To answer these questions, we need to take a close look at how these images are used in other prophecies. Specifically, we are going back to the book of Daniel to see how other creatures with multiple heads and horns are explained by the angelic interpreters. What we find in these other visions will provide more precise definitions of how the images of horns and heads should be understood.

The 2nd Empire Has 2 Horns and 1 Head

The 4th beast of Daniel 7 is not the only multi-horned creature portrayed in the prophecies of Daniel:

Then I lifted my gaze and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last.

Daniel 8:3

The significance of the ram is explained by the angel Gabriel:

and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." ... And he said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end. The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.

Daniel 8:16, 19-20

The main point here is that the two horns represented two kingdoms that exercised their power together. The two kingdoms of Media and Persia ruled together at the same time. This aspect of their empire is represented by the dual horns on the ram. The empire of the Medes and Persians was the 2nd of the four great world powers that would succeed each other during the domination of Israel. This empire was

represented by a bear in Daniel 7. [\[6 \]](#)

The 3rd Empire Has 4 Horns and 4 Heads

The 3rd world power to dominate Israel is also depicted with multiple horns.

While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between its eyes. ... Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

Daniel 8:5, 8

Later in the chapter, an angel explains the significance of this goat's horns.

And the shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. And the broken horn and four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power.

Daniel 8:21-22

In the previous chapter of Daniel, we find this same 3rd world power, which the angel identified as the empire of Greece, but here it has four heads.

After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads,

Daniel 7:6

As we have already seen, “horns” and “heads” both represent kings. It seems reasonable to conclude then that “horns” and “heads” are emphasizing different aspects of a kingdom. The horns seem to represent the raw political and military power of a kingdom. The heads appear to represent the decision-making aspect of a kingdom, the ability of a ruler to decide how to use its military and political power.

A more complete understanding of the prophecy concerning this 3rd empire is one that combines the meaning of the images of Daniel 7 and 8 into a comprehensive whole. The first king of Greece will create the empire. After his death, the power he wielded will be divided into four smaller areas, each having autonomous or separate decision-making control over the use of their power. All four of these areas exercise their authority at the same time, but separately from each other.

The Greek Empire completely conquered the territory of the Medo-Persian Empire. The Greek Empire was represented as the leopard with four wings on its back and as having four heads in Dan 7:6. The first king of the Greek Empire was Alexander the Great who conquered the Medo-Persian Empire in just three years. [[7](#)]

Significance of Multiple Horns & Heads on Prophetic Creatures

By combining the images in Daniel 7 & 8 for both the Medo-Persian and Greek Empires, we understand these prophecies better, as well as the symbolism of heads and horns. In Daniel 8, we see that the Medo-Persian beast had two horns, and the Medo-Persian creature (a bear) in Daniel 7 had only one head. The two horns tell us that there were two separate regions which had political and military power, and the single head speaks to a unified command of those two powers.

The two images representing the Greek Empire also reveal the power structure after the death of the first king. That structure was very different from the way the Medo-Persian Empire was organized. In Daniel 8, the four horns that arise to replace the single horn of the first king represent the raw political and military power of the four separate kingdoms. In Daniel 7, the leopard's four heads tell us that there would be four separate decision-makers controlling those four kingdoms. There are four heads in Daniel 7 and four horns in Daniel 8. It would seem that the power of each horn in Daniel 8 is self-directed since there are four heads in Daniel 7. Each eventually ran their territories as separate kingdoms with some waging war against each other, breaking all bonds.

So, the command and control function of the four empires is

represented as heads in Daniel 7. The emphasis in Daniel 8 is the political and military power of the empires and it represents this power using the image of horns. The heads in Daniel 7 seem to represent the decision-making ability, while the horns in Daniel 8 seem to represent the power wielded by that part of the empire.

Significance of Multiple Horns & Heads in Revelation 13 and 17

We now possess two important pieces of information. First, the beast in Revelation 17 is the very same beast seen in Rev 13:1-10 and the 4th beast of Daniel 7. All three passages are referring to the same beast which represents the final form of the 4th and last of the Gentile world powers to have dominion over Israel. Second, we now know that the horns of the beast represent separate regions of power ("*kingdoms*") that are exercised at the same time with each other. We also now understand that the heads of the beast represent a degree of autonomy or decision- making in how that region's power is used.

[\[8 \]](#)

So, the beast of Revelation 17 with 7 heads and 10 horns has 10 regions with military power, and 7 rulers deciding how the power of the 10 regions is used. We know from the consideration of the prophecies of Daniel 7 & 8 that a prophetic creature with multiple horns means that each horn exercises power at the same time with every other horn. We can, therefore, conclude that the 10 horns of the beast of Rev 17, 13:1-10, and Daniel 7 represent an empire whose power structure has 10 regions, each operating at the same time with the others. We also understand that the 7 heads are the semi-autonomous decision-makers directing the power of the 10 regions, each also operating at the same time with each other. The 7 remaining horns of Daniel 7 represent both the decision-making authority and the political and military power. These different aspects of a kingdom's rule are represented separately as 7 heads and 10 horns in Revelation.

[\[9 \]](#)

Something Seems Wrong - Is it a Problem, a Flaw, or a Puzzle?

We saw that the final form of the 4th beast was described three times in Daniel 7. We also saw that there were 6 elements connecting the

beast of Rev 13:1-10 with the 4th beast of Daniel 7. These 6 elements confirmed that we are seeing the same beast in these two passages. The description of the beast in Revelation 17 contains 3 of those 6 elements. This allowed us to also recognize that the same beast is being discussed in all three passages, Revelation 17, Daniel 7 and Rev 13:1-10.

The beast's 10 horns in Revelation 17 must also then operate symbolically just as they do in the Daniel 7 & 8 prophecies. Since the multiple horns and heads in Daniel 7 & 8 are regions each exercising their power at the same time, then the multiple horns and heads of the beast in Revelation 17 must also be powerful regions existing and operating at the same time.

However, Rev 17:8-13 presents us with a very perplexing puzzle. We have found that multiple horns on prophetic creatures represent multiple regions within an empire exercising their power at the same time as the others. Yet the passage of Rev 17:8-13 very clearly also shows that multiple heads of the beast exercise power one after the other. The perplexing aspect of Rev 17:8-13 is that a clear progression through the "kings" or heads is indicated.

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

Revelation 17:9b-10

Stated again, careful consideration of the multiple horned creatures of Daniel 7 & 8 clearly leads to the conclusion that multiple horns are separate powerful regions ruling at the same time. However, Rev 17:8-13 also clearly shows a power structure where the 7 "kings" come after each other.

The angel who is speaking to the Apostle John is doing so from the perspective of the 6th king. Five kings have come and gone. Currently, the 6th king is reigning. After him, a 7th will come who will remain a little while. Clearly, the angel is indicating a progression through the 7 heads or kings.

How are we to reconcile this disparity? Are the heads and horns of the

beast to be seen in a manner consistent with their meaning in Daniel 7 & 8, or are they to be seen in a manner consistent with Rev 17:9b-10? Are the heads and horns to be interpreted as separate regions exercising their power at the same time? Or are they to be interpreted as exercising their power one after the other?

The interpretation of multiple horns representing the exercise of power at the same time is supplied by the angel Gabriel in Dan 8:15-22. The interpretation of multiple heads representing regions exercising power one after the other is based on the interpretation supplied by the angel in Rev 17:8-13. [\[10 \]](#)

A Proposed Solution to the Puzzle

We cannot reject or ignore either interpretation. Both are based on clear guides in the scriptural texts themselves. The answer to this perplexing interpretive puzzle, then, is to not select either one or the other, but to recognize that both are involved.

Therefore, the heads and horns of the beasts of Daniel 7, Rev 13:1-10, and Revelation 17 must be interpreted as regions that are somehow exercising their power both at the same time as each other, as well as one after the other. While this may appear incompatible with itself on the surface, it actually provides the needed key to correctly interpret and unlock more difficult questions in Rev 17:8-13.

How These Two Governing Structures Might Work

The first paragraph of the proposed scenario provides the solution to this perplexing interpretive puzzle.

Ten regional powers decide to unite. Each region may contain many former nations. Just as many nations may form one region, these ten regions will also combine their power into one confederation with a loose coordinating central authority. ... The alliance creates the office of a supreme executive to coordinate the actions of all ten members. Each of the ten regions is to supply a leader who will serve as the supreme executive for a fixed term. At the conclusion of each term, the authority of the supreme executive is to pass to a representative from another

region.

The Contemporaneous Exercise of Power

Ten regions join together to form a confederation type governing structure. These regions retain a measure of autonomous authority which is enforced and secured by its own local power. The contemporaneous aspect of the Daniel 7 & 8 multiple horn interpretations is upheld. Each of the 10 regions would be autonomous to a degree and each region would be exercising its power at the same time as the other nine powers.

The Consecutive Exercise of Power

These 10 regions are not completely isolated from each other. They have come together for mutual advantage. This means there must also be a centralized cohesive nature to the governing structure of this confederation. Without it, the 10 powers would be completely separate entities or "*kingdoms*." The centralized element must be one which coordinates the interactions of the 10 regions providing a common advantage to all 10. This central governing structure must be strong enough to resolve disputes between members and coordinate disparate views on the wide range of issues that would naturally arise. However, its authority must not be so dominant that it suppresses the limited autonomy of the 10 members or the confederation ceases to exist as 10 semiseparate regions.

There is a method of providing sufficient but not too strong central authority which would also satisfy the interpretive requirements for the sequential nature of the rulers. This method requires each ruler of the 10 regions to serve a limited term in the central authority role. After that limited term is over, the central authority would pass to the next regional member. From the perspective of the confederation, this rotation would hopefully mitigate against the central authority becoming too dominant. This arrangement would also ensure greater unity among the 10 because each member would be guaranteed an equal opportunity to serve in the central executive position.

Has this Type of Rotating Power Sharing Been Used Before?

Would this be something new? Has this type of contemporaneous and consecutive authority ever actually been used? As a matter of fact, it is being used right now. There are many examples today of nations banding together to accomplish things they could not do individually. These international bodies typically use a rotating arrangement where each member nation serves as the 'chair,' heading up the committee or council for a limited fixed term. After the term ends, another member nation takes up the responsibilities and authority as the body's leader for the next term.

In this type of shared-rotating leadership arrangement, each member nation exercises their own national authority at the same time and alongside every other national member (contemporaneous). As each nation takes up the leadership as the rotating head, they also serve one after the other (consecutive).

This type of shared rotating arrangement was unknown when Daniel and Revelation were written. Yet, while their prophecies are ancient, their fulfillment is still future. The question we must consider is whether a similar type of shared rotating leadership arrangement is compatible with the prophecies of Revelation 17. Such an arrangement would seem far less complicated than many of the interpretations for Rev 17:10 that were offered in the past.

Instead of Finding a Flaw We Have Unlocked a Puzzle

This type of governing arrangement in the final form of the 4th world Gentile power would satisfy both requirements seen in the passages. The 10 regions that make up the final form of the beast each exercise their power at the same time as each other. This requirement was seen with the multiple horned beasts from Daniel 7 & 8. Each of the regions or members of the confederation would also be expected to serve in the supreme executive position of the central authority for a brief time. This rotation of centralized authority would provide a sequential nature to the governance of the confederation. As each member or region serves as the head of the centralized authority this consecutive aspect of leadership would satisfy the requirement of Rev 17:9-10 where we observe the 7 rulers serving one after the other. The reason why all 10 members do not serve, but rather only 7 are mentioned in

Rev 17:9-10, is explored later.

Unlocking the Puzzle Reveals Details about the Last Empire

So far in this first chapter, we have seen that the prophetic passages of Daniel 7, Rev 13:1-10, and Revelation 17 individually and collectively indicate that the final form of the last Gentile world power to dominate Israel will consist of 10 members joined together. In Daniel 7 & 8 we learned that each of these powerful regions will exercise their power at the same time as each other, while Rev 17:9-10 revealed that these regions would also exercise their power one after the other.

This apparent inconsistency is resolved when we realize that the contemporaneous and consecutive requirements of the prophecies refer to different aspects of their power structure. The contemporaneous exercise of power involves each individual region exercising its authority at the same time as all the others. The consecutive exercise of power refers to the rotation of leadership in the central authority for the confederation. Thus, the two clear prophetic indications for when these regions exercise power lead to the understanding of how these 10 regions will construct their governing arrangement. Also, this understanding satisfied the two seemingly conflicting prophetic interpretations without needing to reject, reduce, or ignore one or the other. Knowing the nature of this governing arrangement, we can unlock even more difficult puzzles later.

Piecing Together a Timeline for the Life of the Beast

We know that the beasts in Daniel 7, Revelation 13 and 17 are prophetic images of the same final form of the last empire. This helps us piece together a more complete picture of this final empire than what each individual passage may tell us. By combining what we are told in all three passages, our understanding of this beast is enhanced. One of the benefits is a better understanding of the sequence of events during the time this beast reigns over the world. So, to create a combined timeline of events we need to look at these passages again.

The Chronology of Daniel 7 Is Aided by Clues from Daniel 9

One of the six elements that connect the beast of Rev 13:1-10 and the 4th beast of Daniel 7 is the length of the beast's reign. These two different expressions both equal 3 ½ years.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

Revelation 13:5

And he will ... wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7:25

The 9th chapter of Daniel gives the location of this important 3½ year period. These 3 ½ years are part of a longer length of time prophetically described to Daniel in 9:24-27. Daniel chapter 9 will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter and in the first appendix. However, a brief preview of its contents now will help us locate this 3 ½ year time period from Daniel 7 and Revelation 13.

Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place.

Daniel 9:24

The “weeks” are groups of seven. “Seventy weeks” are 70 groups of 7. For reasons that will be examined in detail in the next chapter (and especially in the first appendix), these 70 “weeks” should be regarded as 70 groups of 7 years or 490 years total. The six results mentioned in v. 24 will arrive and remain after these 490 years are completed. The 70 weeks of years are divided into 3 segments, 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and one final week. The last week, or the last 7 years of this prophetic time, is also divided in half.

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who

makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Daniel 9:27

This 70th week of years will begin when a 7-year agreement is established by one who breaks its provisions half-way through. The second half of this 7-year period, this 3 ½ year length of time, will involve destruction and desolations.

This is important. We now have 3 prophetic passages that each talk about very bad things happening for 3 ½ years - Dan 7:25, Rev 13:5 and Dan 9:27. Consider the verses together.

As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time."

Daniel 7:24-25

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for 42 months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.

Revelation 13:5-7

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Daniel 9:27

In Dan 7:25 and Rev 13:5 the beast is given authority to rule and overpower the people of God for 3 ½ years. As we have just seen, Dan

9:27 speaks about a 7-year agreement with very bad things beginning half way through. Abominations and desolations follow after the midpoint of the 7-year accord. As will be confirmed in the chapters to come, the last half of the final 70th week of Dan 9:27 is the same time as the 3 ½ years of Dan 7:25 and the same time as the 42 months in Rev 13:5. This 3 ½ year span of time in all three passages corresponds to the 3 ½ year reign of the Antichrist.

Locating the 3 ½ Years among Events in Revelation 17:9-11

Locating the 3 ½ year reign of the beast during the last half of the final 7 years of Israel's testing helps us define the chronology of events in Rev 17:8-13.

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

Revelation 17:9b-11

The Antichrist's reign will be the full second half of the 7-year period announced in Dan 9:27. This final form of the final beast will reign for the last 42 months, or the last 3 ½ years of the 7-year period of testing for Israel and the world. This too will be examined in detail in the chapters to come.

Who is the 8th Ruler from Revelation 17:11 & Where Does He Fit?

We have previously seen that the beast with 7 heads in Rev 13:1-10 is the same beast in Rev 17:2-10. Both passages say that the beast has exactly 7 heads. We are helped in our understanding of what these 7 heads represent in Rev 17:9b-10. Here the 7 heads of the beast are both mountains and kings. Verse 10 reveals the rotations of these 7 kings. So far, everything seems to fall into place.

But in the very next verse, we have something new. An 8th king is mentioned. In fact, this 8th king is himself called "*the beast*." And what is more, he is said to be one of the previous 7 kings. So, Rev 17:11 tells us that the 8th king is really one of the previous 7 but that he is

also "*the beast*." This all sounds extremely confusing.

However, as we continue forward things will again fall back into place. We will see that the 8th king is the same individual as the other horn of Daniel 7, and the beast of Revelation 13. All the passages are talking about the same individual during the same period of time. This individual is the Antichrist and his reign will be for 3 ½ years. This will all come together as we consider the additional light that many other passages shed upon the interpretation of Revelation 17.

Demonstrating all these assertions will take place over several chapters. However, we will go ahead and discuss one now. We will find that the rule of the 8th king of Rev 17:11 is the 3 ½ years of authority given to the other horn of Daniel 7, the last half of the 70th week of years in Dan 9:27, and the 42 months of authority given to the beast in Revelation 13. We will find that all four passages are speaking about the Antichrist's 3 ½ years of destructive rule. Identifying the length of the 8th king's reign, and the knowledge of where that reign occurs during the final half of the 7-year period of Dan 9:27 allows us to also place the events involving the first 7 kings of Rev 17:9-10 prior to this time.

If the reign of the 8th king begins at the midpoint of the final 7-year period and continues through to the end, or for 42 months or 3 ½ years, then the reigns of the preceding 7 "*kings*" must all complete their rotations as the supreme executive by the midpoint of the 7-year strong covenant with Israel. Everything happening in Rev 17:10 must occur before the halfway mark of the final week of Dan 9:24-27.

What is the Beast?

Several questions may be churning in your mind at this point. Among them might be - How can the beast both reign for the 42 months of the last half of the 7 years when other aspects of the beast are said to be reigning prior to this time? Is the beast only the 8th king, or is the beast the one with the 7 heads and 10 horns? Is there more than one beast?

These types of questions are understandable given the difficulty of interpreting Rev 17:8-13. We must remember that the angel is

describing a process, a series of events as the beast itself continues on to its final, murderous, blasphemous form. That process begins with the structure of the beast as a 10 region confederation and continues on until the beast is a one man, worldwide dictatorial regime. So, when we read about the "*beast*" in these passages we should keep in mind that we are seeing the structure of the governing authority at different points as it is changing.

If we were to take pictures of a butterfly from the time it hatches as an egg, include its time as a caterpillar, its time in the chrysalis, and finally as the beautiful winged insect, those photos would be very different, but would still show the same creature. The beast also changes over time, and that is why the beast seems to be different things. At different times the "*beast*" is different, because events bring about change.

The beast in Daniel 7, Revelation 13 & 17 refers to the ruling authority of that 4th empire to dominate Israel which began with the Roman Empire as it rose up around the remnants of the Greek Empire. Those individuals who comprise "*the beast*" change over time as rulers and administrations rise and others are replaced. "*The beast*" is Rome's governing authority. Those who possessed governing authority under Augustus were not the same individuals who exercised authority under Claudius. As time moves on and individuals rise and fall in the administration of Roman authority, the title "*beast*" remains accurately applied, because the continuity of that authority continues.

An individual member of the Roman government, or even some of those involved in administering Rome's affairs, could not be called "*the beast*." It is the full power or complete authority of the empire that is "*the beast*." All those who collectively exercise that full power at any given point are "*the beast*" as that authority flows through all of them together.

This is how the beast of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 & 17 can represent an empire and also those operating in that empire. The Antichrist himself can be called "*the beast*" because, at a future time, the entire authority of that Roman rule will reside in him alone as the 4th empire's absolute ruler. For the current discussion, we should

remember that Rev 17:8-13 is describing the process by which this Roman power changes into its final form. That final form is described by the angel in Rev 17:11.

Events Leading up to the Last Half of the Last Seven Years

Knowing that the final form of the beast is to reign for the last 3 ½ years of the final 7-year period, attention can be focused on the events that lead up to this turning point. Some of these events are what the angel describes in Rev 17:9-10.

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

Revelation 17:9b-10

The angel specifically says that the 7 heads of the beast have dual meanings. The heads are said to represent the “*mountains on which the woman sits.*” By this statement, the angel is demonstrating the connection between the initial form of the beast and the woman who rides it.

The Seven Mountains = Rome

The “*seven mountains*” are interpreted by many to refer to the 7 hills of the city of Rome. This would certainly be consistent with the origins of the initial form of this fourth beast as seen in Daniel 7. The initial form of that fourth beast was the Roman Empire. That the power of Rome will once again be active during the last period of 7 years is confirmed by Dan 9:26-27.

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. ... And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week

Daniel 9:26, 27

The Romans destroyed the temple and Jerusalem in 70 A.D. [[11](#)] The Romans were identified in this prophecy as “*the people of the prince who is to come.*” [[12](#)] If the Romans were “*the people of the prince*” and the “*prince*” is the same one who initiates the final 7 years with

his “covenant,” then a connection between the power of ancient Rome and the power of a yet future Rome is established. [13]

And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

Revelation 17:18

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits

Revelation 17:9

Many see a confirmation in v. 18 that v. 9 is referring to Rome. When considering these two verses it seems certain that the “seven mountains” refers to a city of power. At the time the book of Revelation was written only one city would have been universally identified as the 7-hilled city, and that was Rome. All of this is examined more fully in later chapters.

The Seven Kings Reign Consecutively

The angel also clearly states that the 7 heads are 7 kings. In v. 10 the angel reveals the consecutive nature to the reigns of the 7 kings. From the time perspective of the angel, 5 of the 7 kings have come and gone, a 6th is currently in power, and the 7th will be coming. Clearly, a consecutive order is being identified.

The seven heads are ... and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

Revelation 17:9, 10

The angel is describing the rotation of the first 7 regions’ representatives through the supreme executive position of the central authority of the confederation. From the time perspective of the angel, 5 supreme executives have served and surrendered authority, the 6th supreme executive is currently serving, and a 7th supreme executive will follow whose term is described by the angel as “a little while.”

Why There Are Only 7 and Not 10 Heads

Rev 17:9-10 involves only 7 “kings” not 10. The reason there are only 7 kings is that there are only 7 heads on the beast in Rev 13:1-10 and

in Rev 17:3, 7, 9. Each of the three presentations of the final form of the 4th beast in Daniel 7 describes 3 horns being removed or subdued by "*another horn*" (Dan 7:7-8, 19-20, 23-24). Three of the original 10 "*kings*" are removed leaving only 7.

The description of the beast in Rev 13:1-10 and Rev 17:3 & 7 reflects the empire's condition after those 3 "*kings*" have already been removed. The semi-autonomous authority of these 3 regions has been taken from them. They come under the control of the Antichrist, the other horn of Daniel 7. This explains why the beast in Rev 13:1-10 and 17:3 & 7 still has 10 horns. The revived Roman confederation still contains 10 regions. Yet the beast has only 7 heads because there are now only 7 rulers governing the 10 regions.

The symbolism of the beast having 7 heads means that 7 of the 10 original members of the confederation retain their semiautonomous status. The symbolism of the 10 horns means that all 10 regions still have strength. The control of that strength, however, is limited to the 7 heads.

While only 7 members of the confederation serve their successive terms as a supreme executive, originally all 10 members were intended to serve in that rotating post. At the time the confederation of 10 regions is formed, each region is to exercise a degree of limited autonomy, and each region is to have one of its representatives serve a term as the supreme executive of the confederation's central authority.

Some may have noticed that this would require 8 leaders over the 10 regions, not the 7 we have been talking about. Since the Antichrist would control 3 regions himself, that would seem to make him a leader, ruler, or king. The 7 other regions control their own decision-making as semi-independent members. That would make 8 decision-makers controlling the actions of the 10 regions. This issue is the main topic of Chapter Three.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TEMPLE MOUNT IN JERUSALEM WILL BE SHARED

Sometime after this 10 member confederation is formed an individual from this group establishes an agreement with Israel. This person is the Antichrist, although his initial activities may not hint at his eventual role. This agreement will be for a period of 7 years and seems to be a forced compromise. By the middle of this 7-year agreement, a Jewish Temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem on the temple mount and Jewish sacrificial offerings will be made there. During the first half of this 7-year agreement, the temple mount will be divided between Jewish and non-Jewish authorities with each having control over different areas.

A treaty or agreement will be formed between Israel, her neighbors, and a ruling authority. This agreement begins the final 7-year period in which the Antichrist will operate. Prophecies of this 7-year block of time show that the Antichrist himself will play a part in establishing this strong agreement. Thus, the Antichrist has a significant role in initiating the final period in which he will become the dominant person on earth.

In this chapter, we will be examining many aspects of this future pivotal agreement with Israel, including the identity of the participants in this binding accord. Also of significant interest is the Jewish Temple and the Jewish worship rituals that can only be performed there. These will figure prominently in the events that result from this 7-year agreement. We will look at the forces put in

motion because of it and the overall timeline for these and other related prophetic events. All these various elements of the biblical prophecies will be encountered as we work our way toward the main goal of this chapter – examining the claim that sometime during the 7-year firm covenant the temple mount will really be shared between Jewish and non-Jewish authorities.

We need to trace some of these future events through various prophetic passages. While some may contribute more than others, none individually reveals everything that is disclosed in the Scriptures. When we combine the many relevant passages the fullest picture of these events emerges.

Jeremiah's 70 Years in Daniel 9

We start again in the book of Daniel. As the 9th chapter of Daniel begins, the prophet is reading from the Old Testament book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah prophesied while the last Israelite kingdom was being conquered. Those who survived were removed from their land and brought back as captives to Babylon. Daniel was among these captives. Eventually, the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and pulled down the beautiful temple that Solomon had built. These devastating events began when Daniel was a young man.

Now Daniel is an old man and the Jewish people long for a return to their homeland and to their heritage. As Daniel was reading the Jewish Scriptures he realized that Jeremiah said the captivity of the Jewish people would end after 70 years (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10).

I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

Daniel 9:2

When Daniel understood that the 70 years could be coming to an end he began to fast and pray. Daniel's prayer is recorded in 9:4-19. The beautiful, humble, earnest prayer of this godly man was greeted by a new prophecy through the angel Gabriel.

Gabriel's 70 Weeks of Years

Look at how Daniel ends his prayer with God. Especially notice his concern for the sanctuary (temple), Jerusalem, and the Jewish people.

So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Thy servant and to his supplications, and for Thy sake, O Lord, let Thy face shine on Thy desolate sanctuary. O my God, incline Thine ear and hear! Open Thine eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Thy name. ... O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.

Daniel 9:17-19

Gabriel begins his prophecy to Daniel by saying,

*Seventy weeks have been decreed
for your people,
and your holy city,
to finish the transgression,
to make an end of sin,
to make atonement for iniquity,
to bring in everlasting righteousness,
to seal up vision and prophecy,
and to anoint the most holy place.*

Daniel 9:24

With his first words, Gabriel says that the prophecy is for Jerusalem and Daniel's people. Their captivity in Babylon will end after the 70 years prophesied by Jeremiah. However, there would be an additional 70 weeks of years before the 6 elements of the promise in v. 24 are established. Gabriel says there will be 70 weeks of years, or 490 additional years before these 6 promised conditions, including "everlasting righteousness," would exist.

Gabriel Reveals That Jerusalem Will Be Rebuilt

Gabriel explains that sometime after the 70 years of captivity are completed an official decree to rebuild and restore Jerusalem will be given. He also assures Daniel that the decree will result in the city's complete restoration. This was part of Daniel's earnest prayer.

So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

Daniel 9:25

The additional 490 years begin with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem from its ruined condition. Gabriel separates these 70 weeks of years into three groups. The first is 7 weeks followed by 62 weeks. These two groups account for 483 years or 69 weeks of years.

Jerusalem and the Rebuilt Second Temple Will Be Destroyed

Not only was the city of Jerusalem going to be built again, but so was the temple. However, the restoration of the temple sanctuary is revealed to Daniel in what must have been a crushing blow. Daniel is told that his beloved city and its temple will be destroyed for the second time.

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Daniel 9:26a

Daniel learns that the temple, which did not exist when he prayed, will be built again. He knows that it will be rebuilt because Gabriel says that it will be destroyed again. Daniel now knows that after the 69th week of years his people will be worse off than during his own time. Not only will the restored Jerusalem and the rebuilt temple be destroyed again, but the long-awaited Messiah will be killed.

This must have been a tremendous blow to Daniel. He probably assumed that the “*desolations*” his people were suffering would end after 70 years. What Gabriel revealed to him must have been unimaginable. The future held not only the loss of a rebuilt temple and capital but the Messiah, the anointed one, would come and be killed.

It is important to recognize that the terrible events of v. 26 occur *after* the second group of years, the 62 weeks, is concluded. It is after the end of the 483rd year from the official decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem that the Messiah will be killed, and the rebuilt city and its

temple will be destroyed for the second time.

Gabriel Reveals the Events in the Last Week of Years

Only one of the 70 weeks remains, there are only 7 more years until “*everlasting righteousness*” and the other longed for conditions from Dan 9:24 are established. Daniel’s prayer for his people, his city of Jerusalem and its temple are all addressed as Gabriel reveals the events of this final week of years.

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

Daniel 9:27

The last 7 years seem to provide a measure of restoration that is ultimately halted, followed by even more destruction. Daniel learns that after the end of the 69th week and the destruction of the second temple, there will again be “*sacrifice and grain offering.*” The 70th week, the final 7 years, takes the form of a “*firm covenant.*” We will look more closely at this covenant a little later.

Gabriel’s Prophecy Hints of a Third Temple

For a second time, Daniel learns that the city and the temple will be rebuilt again because Gabriel reveals that terrible things will take place there. Daniel learns that the temple will be rebuilt for a 3rd time because Gabriel says that sacrifices will cease and abominations and desolations will occur in the temple.

Stopping the sacrifices in the middle of the 7-year firm covenant suggests some kind of restoration. Both the city and its temple were destroyed for the second time after the end of the 69th week. However, Gabriel says that during the 70th week the sacrifices are halted. For the sacrifices to be halted they must begin again. Before they can begin again some amount of control and ritual purification of the sacrificial location must take place. The sacrifices would be practically impossible if the Jewish people do not have secure access to the

temple area where they must be performed. Gabriel's prophecy about more sacrifices in the last week of years hints at a third temple. When Gabriel says the abominations of desolations will occur, this also suggests another temple must be built by that time.

Gabriel's Prophecy Hints That Jerusalem Will Be Rebuilt Again

When Gabriel reveals that the sacrifices would be halted in the middle of the final week and that abominations and desolations follow, Daniel must surely have wondered what this would mean for Jerusalem. Renewed sacrifices suggest the temple's restoration, but also hint at Jerusalem's restoration. If a temple is to exist in the future and sacrifices will be halted, this would seem to point to a restored Jerusalem also since a temple could not be constructed without secure access and control of the site. Secure access and control of the temple site would seem difficult to maintain if Jerusalem itself were not also secure.

Gabriel Hints of a Break Between the 69th and 70th Weeks

We have just seen that Gabriel's message about the 70th week of years strongly suggests the existence of a 3rd temple and a rebuilt Jerusalem. However, this conclusion seems at odds with the events in the previous verse. In Dan 9:26, Gabriel reveals that both the temple and Jerusalem will be destroyed *after* the conclusion of the 69th week.

If the temple and Jerusalem are destroyed after the 69th week, why do the temple and the city seem present and intact in the following week of years? There are three potential solutions to the dilemma. Either the temple and the city are rebuilt before, during or after the 70th week of years. However, while all three are possible solutions, they are not all equally probable.

The 3 events prophesied in Dan 9:26 have already occurred and are known to history. The city of Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed in 70 A.D. by Roman armies under the command of General Titus. The death of Jesus the Messiah occurred around 30-33 A.D., more than 3 ½ decades prior. Dan 9:26 places them both after the end of the 69th week of years.

The big question is - how do they fit with the events in the 70th week of years. The final 7 years are described in Dan 9:27. If the death of the Messiah occurs after the end of the 69th week, then that 69th week must have ended before Jesus died in 30 - 33 A.D. Did the 70th week begin at the end of the 69th week? If so, then some 3 ½ years later there should have been a suspension of sacrifices followed by abominations and desolation. But history tells us that the temple continued to operate until its destruction in 70 A.D. All of this strongly suggests that a break between the 69th and 70th weeks is the only choice where the prophecies don't collide with actual historical events. [[14](#)] For these and other reasons, it is the interpretation followed in this book. A fuller development of these questions is in Appendix One.

How Long Is the Firm Covenant with Israel and Who Makes It?

This “firm covenant with the many” comprises the 70th and last week of years. Therefore, the length of this agreement is 7 years. Who makes this agreement with Israel? To answer this, we must identify the person called “he” in Dan 9:27.

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

Daniel 9:27

Who does this pronoun point towards? The preceding verse allows only two possibilities.

So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Daniel 9:25-26

One possibility is “*Messiah the Prince*” from vs. 9:25 & 26. [[15](#)] The second possibility is “*the prince who is to come*” from the end of v. 26. Of the two possibilities, the “*prince who is to come*” is mentioned just prior to the pronoun “*he*.” [[16](#)] However, there is another reason to see “*he*” as referring to “*the prince who is to come*.”

There seem to be 2 transition points associated with Gabriel’s 70 weeks of years. The first is when the 70 weeks begin. The second is when the 70th week begins. Both transitions feature human activity. The first transition initiates the 70 weeks of years by means of a decree.

Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people, and your holy city. ... So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.

Daniel 9:24a, 25

The event initiating this final 70 week period was of human action. The decree to restore Jerusalem was issued by a king. A discussion of which decree satisfies the requirements of Dan 9:24-25 can be found later in the first appendix.

The second transition initiates the 70th week by means of a firm covenant. The first transition was initiated by human action which initially resulted in favorable conditions for the Jewish people but ends badly for them. The second transition also seems to initially result in favorable conditions for the Jewish people that also ends very badly.

There seems to be a certain amount of symmetry in these two transitions and the periods they introduce. Thus, both periods of time, the first 69 weeks, and the final 1 week are initiated by nondivine human rulers.

By the end of the 69th week of years, the first 3 empires of Daniel 7 have risen and declined. The final empire, the 4th beast, Rome, was ruling in its initial phase. The destruction of the city and sanctuary of Jerusalem was carried out in 70 A.D. by the people of a yet coming prince. That coming prince of the 4th empire is the one who will initiate the final period of 7 years by making a “*firm covenant with the many*

for one week."

This may sound confusing. How could this prince's people be responsible for destroying the temple and Jerusalem in 70 A.D. if he himself does not appear in history until after these events have already happened? Why does Gabriel associate a ruler, whose great grandparents were not even born when the Jewish Temple and its city are destroyed, with the Romans who did these deeds? The phrasing of Gabriel's prophecy provides that answer.

... and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Daniel 9:26

When the people "*destroy the city and the sanctuary*" their prince is still coming, not yet arrived, not yet a prince. He is associated with the people who destroy the temple, but he himself is not their prince yet because he is not even alive yet.

The Coming Prince Is Not Yet the "Beast"

A final issue is the status of "*the prince who is to come*" at the time he makes the covenant with Israel. Many have assumed this coming "*prince*" must be ruling the confederation of regions to have the authority to form this firm covenant with Israel. [17] However, Dan 9:27 has nothing to say on this issue. The covenant with Israel could also be initiated by an individual who is not the supreme ruler of his government. The individual making or forcing this covenant is "*the prince who is coming*." The prince, who was yet coming at the time of the destruction of the city and sanctuary, could also not yet be "*the prince*" at the time he makes the covenant. It is certainly possible that this individual makes the covenant with authority given to him by another ruler or governing body. This investiture of authority and covenant making could be concluded still before this individual is installed as the "*prince*." This understanding or interpretation is just as permissible as the alternate view.

The Covenant Will Be a Forced Compromise

Several Old Testament scholars have noted that Dan 9:27 contains

forceful language concerning the covenant. [18]

...the two contracting parties are not viewed as standing on an equality, but he who concludes or who confirms the covenant prevails, and imposes or forces the covenant on the other party.

[19]

Finally, the language used by Gabriel was quite strong. It indicated that the Antichrist will force or impose a strong covenant upon the many. [20]

The prophecy of the 7-year covenant does not occur by itself. It appears at the end of a rich passage of prophetic revelation that is given because of Daniel's humble prayer. Daniel fasted and prayed because he was concerned for his people, the ruins of Jerusalem and the temple. The entire prophecy through Gabriel about the 70 weeks of years involves the very things that concerned Daniel.

Daniel's prayer is being answered, but not in the way he expected. Gabriel's prophecy explains that the end of the 70 years in captivity would not result in the final "*completion of the desolations of Jerusalem*" (v. 2). In addition to the 70 years just completed there would be 70 weeks of years before "*everlasting righteousness*" and the anointing of the holy place would be fully seen. This must have been devastating personally for Daniel.

Gabriel reveals that Jerusalem and the temple will experience additional desolations during this 490 year period of time. The end of the Jewish people's captivity in Daniel's time would happen after the 70 years were completed, but Jerusalem and the temple would know more periods of "*desolation*." Both the city and its temple would be rebuilt, destroyed, rebuilt and then polluted again.

Sacrifices End When the Abomination of Desolation Occurs

As we have just seen, in Dan 9:27 Gabriel brings his prophecy for the 70 weeks to a close by describing the culminating abomination that the temple will endure and the desolation which will come to the Jewish people.

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but

in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

Daniel 9:27

Daniel 12 provides more information about this final act. At the end of recording a long series of significant future events, Daniel asks a question.

As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?" And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. ... And from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days."

Daniel 12:8-9, 11

Daniel asks, "*what will be the outcome of these events?*" But he doesn't receive an answer. Instead, Daniel is given more detail concerning the time before the end. He is told that there would be an interim of 1290 days between the "*abomination of desolation*" and the end. Of specific interest is the linking together of the "*abomination of desolation*" with the halting of the "*regular sacrifice*." From these two events, the countdown of 1290 days is marked off to the end.

This means that the halting of the sacrifices and the Abomination of Desolation occur together. They are linked. This passage confirms what is strongly implied in Dan 9:27. The event that causes the sacrifices to stop midway through the 7-year firm covenant also causes abominations and desolations. It is possible that the event called the Abomination of Desolation itself stops the sacrifices.

Halfway Through the Final Week of Years

By comparing the two passages from Daniel, we learn that sacrifices and grain offerings are stopped midway through a 7-year agreement (Dan 9:27). We also know that these regular sacrifices are halted at the same time the Abomination of Desolation occurs (Dan 12:11). This means that the Abomination of Desolation also occurs at the midpoint

of the 7-year covenant. The renewed sacrifices and grain offerings are stopped and the Abomination of Desolation is “set up” 3 ½ years into the final 7-year covenant.

We need to quickly point out that the different methods of measuring 3 ½ years do not all involve the exact same period of time. There is a good deal of overlap to be sure. 1260 days (Rev 11:2-3) is obviously not the same as 1290 days (Dan 12:11), but the 1290 days likely includes the 1260 days.

In Matthew 24 Jesus Confirms the Second Temple's Destruction

During the week before his crucifixion, Jesus taught daily in the temple. At one of these teaching sessions, Jesus had been more confrontational and condemning of the religious hierarchy than the disciples were used to hearing. As he was leaving the temple his disciples came up to him, pointing out the grandeur of God's temple and the surrounding buildings.

And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. And He answered and said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”

Matthew 24:1-2

Then he left the temple and went up to the Mount of Olives, which was just to the east of the temple complex.

His disciples were shocked to hear about the destruction of this temple. It was not just the loss of the magnificent buildings. To lose the temple meant the loss of the nation's place of worship to God. The disciples also knew from history that having their temple torn down would mean that some horrific national tragedy must be coming upon the Jewish people.

Jesus understood with great clarity and sorrow that the temple and the city must be destroyed again. As he shows later in this same chapter, he was well aware of the prophecy in Dan 9:26-27 which spoke about the Messiah's death and the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. After the 69th week of years were concluded, the Messiah

would be “*cut off and have nothing*” and the people of the coming prince would destroy the city and the temple. Knowing that his own death was only days away, Jesus also knew that the temple and the city would later be destroyed.

Jesus’ Prophecy from the Mount of Olives

The Mount of Olives is at a higher elevation than the temple complex. From where Jesus was sitting he could have looked down at the temple and its courtyards. Before him was the temple that he knew would be destroyed.

And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

Matthew 24:3

Since their two questions, “*when*” and “*what will be the sign,*” are so similar in what they seek, Jesus answers both at the same time. While Jesus does not identify “*when*” by saying something like, “all these things will be fulfilled in x number of years,” he does give his disciples certain key events that herald significant, even horrific times for the Jewish people. Christ reveals in a general way the conditions that will surround the end-times. But in vs. 15-16 Christ’s words become specific and terrifying.

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ... for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.

Matthew 24:15-16, 21

There are several very important elements to Jesus’ prophecy in Matthew 24. However, our focus now is the location that Jesus gives for the Abomination of Desolation. [[21](#)]

The Abomination of Desolation Will Be in the Temple

Jesus says that the future Abomination of Desolation will be “*standing*

in the holy place." In ancient Israel, the "*holy place*" typically referred to either the temple itself or to one of the 2 most holy places within the temple. When Jesus says that the Abomination of Desolation will be standing in "*the holy place*" we know that whatever the abomination is, it will be found within the temple.

Jesus' prophecy also confirms that the temple must exist again after it is destroyed. We have seen that the abominable act must take place in the temple at the midpoint of the 70th week of years (Dan 9:27; 12:11), and yet the temple and the city are destroyed after the 69th week of years (Dan 9:26). The temple Jesus taught in and the city where he was crucified were destroyed just as he prophesied in agreement with Dan 9:26.

The Abomination of Desolation and the Second Temple

However, the temple of Jesus' day did not experience the events that are to happen at the Jewish Temple in the prophecy of Dan 9:27. The temple of Jesus' day was destroyed in 70 A.D. This temple did not experience the Abomination of Desolations (see Appendix One). Nor was there a firm covenant for 7 years. Not only does Dan 9:26-27 require a 7-year covenant, but it also requires the city and the temple of Jesus' day to be destroyed before this covenant.

The Abomination of Desolation, seen in Daniel 9 and 12 and confirmed by Jesus, is to take place in the temple. However, the rebuilt temple of Jesus' day did not experience this before it was destroyed. [\[22 \]](#) If certain prophecies about the temple didn't happen in the past, then they must pertain to the future. This is just one of the many reasons we know that the abomination must take place in another temple. Since no other Jewish Temple has existed since 70 A.D., another temple must be erected where these troubling prophecies are fulfilled.

No temple and, therefore, no Jewish sacrificial worship has existed since the destruction of 70 A.D. Therefore, either the Abomination of Desolation and the halting of the regular sacrifice happened sometime between the time Jesus spoke and the temple's destruction, or it is still to occur. Yet there is no indication that "*a firm covenant with the many*" was established before 70 A.D.

If one assumes that the Abomination of Desolation occurs in conjunction with the temple's destruction in 70 A.D., then the firm covenant would need to have been established 3 ½ years before (Dan 9:27, 12:11). Also, Dan 12:11 places the end of the final 70th week 1290 days after the time of the Abomination of Desolation. This would place the end of the 70th week of Dan 9:27 about 73 A.D. Yet none of the six conditions promised in Dan 9:24, that would have arrived in 73 A.D., are known to history. If the 70th week of Dan 9:27 was not involved in the devastation of 70 A.D., then we can reasonably conclude it still pertains to the future.

There are some who understand Jesus' words in Matt 24:15 (and more particularly the parallel passage in Luke 21) as being fulfilled, in whole or in part, by the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. This interpretation and other related issues are examined in Appendix One.

The Man of Lawlessness, the Son of Destruction

In his 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul addresses the issue of whether the Day of the Lord had already occurred. Some of the believers in Thessalonica were concerned that they had missed out on being united with Christ. Paul countered this mistaken idea by reminding them of his previous teaching on the subject.

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed ... to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

Paul reminded the Thessalonians that the “*man of lawlessness*” would take “*his seat in the temple of God.*” Part of Paul's teaching of the end-

time was the presence of a temple, which he called "*the temple of God.*"

There Must Be a Temple Where 'The Man of Lawlessness' Will Sit

In a future time of apostasy and prior to the Day of the Lord judgments, the Antichrist - the "*man of lawlessness*" will sit in the Jewish Temple and proclaim that he is God. For the Antichrist to sit in the Jewish Temple during a future time of apostasy means that there must be a temple at the time he defiles it. There must be a rebuilt Jewish Temple in existence by the time the Antichrist comes to defile it by his own presence and blasphemous claims. We should also notice that the act of entering the temple and sitting there while proclaiming himself above every "*object of worship*" is a very specific prophetic marker in the defilement of the Jewish Temple. This act alone would defile the temple, rendering it unclean for the Jewish sacrificial rituals.

We already know that during the Firm Covenant the Jewish Temple sacrifices will not be halted until the midpoint of those final 7 years. From this, we understand that the Antichrist's blasphemous act could not occur during the first 3 ½ years of the firm covenant. His actions in entering the temple and sitting there while proclaiming his elevation over all other objects of worship would defile the temple, making the temple unclean and an unfit place to offer sacrifices to God. This allows us to anticipate that the Antichrist's act of entering the temple will occur at the same time or after the Abomination of Desolation, but not before this time. It is possible that this act is part of the Abomination of Desolation itself.

In 2 Thes 2:1-5, we find further confirmation for a rebuilt Jewish Temple in the future. Paul connected the 2nd coming of Christ with certain specific events that must come first. Among these precursor events, are a coming apostasy and the defilement of the temple by the "*man of lawlessness*" - "*the son of destruction.*" Paul had previously taught the Thessalonian believers about the Day of the Lord. It is a future time of God's judgments upon those who have rebelled against his rule and authority. It is a major theme in the Old Testament and will begin prior to the coming of the Lord himself. The Day of the Lord

starts as a time of judgment that will purify the world from the sinful rule of mankind, and restore the earth under God's own personal rule (Isa 2:22; Joel 3:14ff; Amos 1, 2, 5:18-20, 8:9; Zech 12-14). [[23](#)]

The Coming of the 'Man of Sin' Is Still Future

Since this passage involves a coming apostasy and the defilement of the temple by the "*man of lawlessness*" followed by the Day of the Lord judgments, it seems unlikely that these precursor events to Christ's coming have already been fulfilled as of today. In fact, this was Paul's point - these precursor events had not occurred, so the Day of the Lord had not yet occurred, so Christ was still to come in judgment and to rule.

Why Are the Gospels Different?

We need to go back to Christ's prophecy from the Mount of Olives. We previously looked at the passage in Matthew 24. In the parallel passage of Luke 21, we find additional information about these future events.

While under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, each gospel writer tells his message in his own way. Some include statements made by Christ that the others chose to omit. The gospel writers' choice to include some but not all the material available does not imply they are misrepresenting what happened. Sometimes their choices were made to emphasize certain aspects of Christ's person and ministry. The writers each tell their gospel from their own perspective and for the future readers they have in mind.

Were we to listen to any four people who were at the same baseball game we would hear four different versions of what happened. They may have sat in different places. Some might have different levels of knowledge about the players that day, the teams playing, or the history of baseball. Some of them might assume we know little about baseball. Any of this might color their perspective on that day's game and how they chose to describe it. Many of the events of the game would seem special to all of them, but there might be other events that were especially memorable to only one or two. In this scenario, none of them say anything untrue, yet they each tell their story differently.

This wouldn't be surprising, and we should not be surprised when the same is found in the gospels.

Comparisons of Christ's Prophecy from Matthew, Mark, and Luke

The three accounts of Jesus' prophecy from the Mount of Olives are one of the many areas we find these subtle differences.

Therefore. when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in winter, or on a Sabbath; for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.

Matthew 24:15-21

But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And let him who is on the housetop not go down, or enter in, to get anything out of his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that it may not happen in the winter. For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, and never shall.

Mark 13:14-19

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be

great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:20-24

Parallel Elements from Matthew, Mark, and Luke

Matthew, Mark, and Luke provide us with the same prophecy by Christ. (Some may dispute this - see Appendix One.) But not all of the elements of the three presentations are the same. Even when there are parallel descriptions sometimes there are still variations in how the meaning is stated.

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Matthew 24

But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Mark 13

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand

Luke 21

... then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains

Matthew 24

... then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains

Mark 13

Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains

Luke 21

... let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house

Matthew 24

And let him who is on the housetop not go down, or enter in, to get anything out of his house;

Mark 13

... and let those who are in the midst of the city depart

Luke 21

... and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak

Matthew 24

... and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak

Mark 13

... and let not those who are in the country enter the city

Luke 21

But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days!

Matthew 24

But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days!

Mark 13

Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days

Luke 21

... for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.

Matthew 24

For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, and never shall.

Mark 13

... because these are days of vengeance, ... for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people

Luke 21

When the same event is told in different ways by the biblical writers, we have a fuller picture than if we only had one description. The differences between the gospel accounts provide us with important information about the status of Jerusalem at different stages during the end-times.

“Abomination of Desolation” & Jerusalem Surrounded by Armies

The reason we came back to Christ’s prophecy from the Mount of Olives is to see an additional element contained only in Luke’s account. Let’s allow our attention to be drawn to the beginning and ending portions of Luke’s passage. At the time of the Abomination of Desolation, the city of Jerusalem will be “*surrounded by armies*” (Luke 21:20).

Therefore, when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;

Matthew 24:15, emphasis added

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains,

Luke 21:20, emphasis added

In both Matthew’s and Luke’s presentation, there is a specific event that is a signal to those living in Jerusalem that desolations are imminent and the people living there literally need to run for their lives. Both Matthew and Luke describe this event as one that will be seen by the people. Both passages involve Jerusalem (Luke mentions the city by name, Matthew indicates this by mentioning the holy place of the temple which is in Jerusalem). Both use the term “*desolation*” which is a highly significant term prophetically from its usage in Daniel. Both say that those in the surrounding region of Judea are to immediately “*flee to the mountains.*”

The “Abomination” & Jerusalem Surrounded Occur Together

Yet, for all the sameness of the parallel features between these two depictions, there are notable differences. Both accounts by Matthew and Luke say that there is a specific event which begins a time of desolation, which should provoke the people to literally drop everything and run. In Matthew, that event is the Abomination of Desolation which takes place in the temple, as earlier prophesied by Daniel. However, in Luke, the event is the sight of armies surrounding Jerusalem.

The level of parallel descriptions between these two passages allows us to see that both occur either at the same time or very near one another chronologically. The sight of armies surrounding Jerusalem and the Abomination of Desolation in the holy place of the temple take place at or near the same time. The Jewish people need to run when they see one or the other.

As was briefly mentioned before, there are those who question whether all of the events in Luke's account relate to end-time events. Many feel there are elements in Christ's discourse as reported by Luke that seem very similar to the unfolding of events in A.D. 70. In that year the Roman general Titus captured Jerusalem after the Jewish revolt and the temple was destroyed just as Christ foretold (Matt 24:1-2, Mark 13:1-2, Luke 21:5-6). The scene of armies surrounding Jerusalem and the carnage that followed are seen by some as a fulfillment in whole or in part of Christ's prophetic discourse in Luke 21. Christ may very well have intended some of his words to relate to the coming destruction in A.D. 70. Yet the parallel features shared between the gospels would seem to link them together in a common fulfillment. How both the nearer term implications and the distant future application may relate to each other is discussed in the first Appendix.

The "Abomination" & Jerusalem Surrounded are Still Future

The many parallel features shared by these passages indicate that they are referring primarily to the same fulfilling events. Since Christ specifically ties the Abomination of Desolation to the prophecy of Daniel, this limits the particular defilement of the temple in Matthew 24 to the same one foretold in Daniel's prophecy. For reasons that are

explored later, the interpretation adopted here sees the Abomination of Desolation and the surrounding of Jerusalem by armies as having a still future fulfillment, occurring at or near the time that the Antichrist takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thes 2:1-5).

Revelation 11

What do the passages we have examined in this chapter so far have to do with Revelation 11? The previous passages have several common elements. Among them is the very important thread involving the temple. Its rebuilding and subsequent destructions were revealed to Daniel by Gabriel, along with the specific conditions and events that will exist just prior to Christ's return. When asked about the sign of his coming and the timing for the destruction of the temple that stood in his day, Christ warned his disciples about a coming time of great tribulation initiated by the Abomination of Desolation in the temple (Matt 24). Christ linked the temple's desolation to the prophecy delivered to Daniel. The conditions revealed to Daniel would then be part of the fulfillment.

The Apostle Paul reminded believers in a letter to the Thessalonians that before the Day of the Lord arrived a lawless one would *"take his seat in the temple of God declaring himself to be god."* Paul reminded them that a general falling away from the faith would also be prevalent. From Paul's statements we pick up other conditions involving the temple before Christ's coming. There will be a temple in the time of the Antichrist, and he will defile it by his blasphemous actions.

In Luke's account of Christ's prophetic warning, he mentions that Jerusalem will be *"trampled underfoot until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."* The Gentile encirclement of Jerusalem is also a sign that should trigger widespread abandonment of the area by the Jewish people. Christ says that those are *"days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled."* From this, we understand that once this specific prophecy begins, Jerusalem will experience continued Gentile occupation until the end of *"the times of the Gentiles."*

Christ's prophecy as told by Matthew, Mark, and Luke differ from each other slightly. But their parallel nature demonstrates that they are all reporting the same prophecy. When they are compared we find that the temple is to be defiled by the Abomination of Desolation about the same time that Jerusalem is encircled by Gentile armies. Once this particular Gentile occupation begins it will continue until the end of the times of the Gentiles.

Rev 11:1-3 is also about the temple and what happens there. We examined the other passages because they lay the foundation both prophetically and historically for the conditions found in Rev 11:1-3.

John Is Commanded to Measure the Temple, Altar, & Worshipers

The Apostle John sees a vision and hears a voice from within it. John also plays a role in the vision's unfolding. Rev 11:1-13 is a vision of future events, which is confirmed for us by the mention of the now familiar 42 month span of time in v. 2 and by the dominant role of the two witnesses, who wield supernatural power for 1260 days. These verses are about events that are still in our future.

Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months. And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.

Revelation 11:1b-3

The Greek word translated as “temple” in Rev 11:1 is instructive. The word is the noun ναός, which refers specifically to the temple itself without the supporting buildings and surrounding precincts. The Jewish temple was a complex of buildings, barriers, and gates. The word ναός, means specifically the shrine or holy building itself, the sacred building at the center of the complex. The instruction to measure given to the Apostle John is restricted to the temple building proper, the altar, and to those worshiping at it.

John Is Prohibited from Measuring the Outer Court

Even more significant is what John is not permitted to measure. John is specifically instructed not to measure any court area outside of the temple or shrine. In fact, a more literal translation of the phrase "*and do not measure it*" would be "*and you must not measure it.*" The Apostle was specifically commanded not to measure the outer court of the temple.

The explanation for excluding that court area from the measurement is: "*for it has been given to the nations*" (Rev 11:2). The Greek word ἔθνοι, translated "*nations*," is usually translated elsewhere in the New Testament as "*Gentiles*." This would explain why John is prohibited from measuring this court - it was under Gentile control. The phrase "*given to the Gentiles*" implies more than just the presence of Gentiles in that court area. The words "*given to*" implies that while Jewish authorities will have secure access and some control of the temple, they will not control the outside court.

If the Jewish Temple mount is partly under Jewish authority and partly not under their authority, this strongly implies that the temple mount itself will be shared. The temple shrine and its immediate surrounding areas will be under some measure of Jewish control, while the rest of the temple mount will be under Gentile control.

The Timeline of Events in Revelation 11:1-3

The vision of Rev 11:1-3 is about the future, but when in the future do the many events of this prophetic vision occur? Being able to place specific events from the vision before or after others within the unfolding scenario of the end-times may well hold significant implications.

One of these implications involves the sharing of the temple mount between Jewish and non-Jewish authorities. Yet this is based on being able to place non-Jewish control over parts of the temple mount at the same time that Jewish authorities have some secure access and control over the temple shrine itself. If we can be certain that both Jewish and non-Jewish authorities will be exercising some measure of control on the temple mount at the same time, then we may say that the temple mount will be shared.

Therefore, the question before us now is what chronology or flow of events in Rev 11:1-3 may lead to the conclusion that the temple mount will be shared? We will divide our examination of these three verses in half. First, we will examine the internal considerations of Rev 11:1-2a including the contribution from other prophetic passages. Then we will do the same for Rev 11:2b-3. Finally, we will combine the conclusions from these two examinations.

The Timeline for Revelation 11:1-2a from Internal Indicators

The chronological placement of the events of Rev 11:1-2a will be considered first.

And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations."

Revelation 11:1-2a

A consideration of the tenses of the verbs is necessary so we can place the events of Rev 11:1-3 in their proper sequence. Here is a translation that stresses the verb tenses:

And a reed like a measuring rod was given to me, while it is being said, "You must arise and you must measure the shrine of God, and the altar, and the ones who are worshiping in it. But you must leave out the outside court of the shrine, and you must not measure it, because it was given to the Gentiles, and they will trample under foot the holy city 42 months. And I will give to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1260 days after they have clothed themselves with sack clothes."

Revelation 11:1-3 [*]

The vision has a present time, a past time and a future time. There is a flow to the events in this vision, with some things happening before or after certain events. This vision is told from the perspective of the one speaking to John within the vision. As of the time the speaker talks with the Apostle, some events have already occurred and others are still awaiting fulfillment. But the entire vision is about things that are

still in the future for us.

The Things Which Already Exist by the Present Time of the Vision

The chronology of these events can be understood by considering the tenses of the speaker's verbs. In the vision, the Apostle John hears a voice, which commands John to do and not do certain things. He is told that he is to arise and measure. These two verbs are imperatives or commands in the present tense. John is to arise and measure immediately. Therefore, the three items to be measured must exist in the present time of the speaker within the framework of the vision. From the perspective of the speaker, the temple proper, the altar, and those who are worshiping in it are all in existence and the speaker commands John to measure them now. So, the temple, the altar, and the worshipers exist in the present time of the vision.

The speaker also issues two other commands, both of which are prohibitions. John is commanded to leave the outside court of the temple shrine out of his measurements. This, too, is in the present tense. He is prohibited or forbidden from measuring it. The outside court must also then be in existence during the present time of the speaker since he commands John to exclude it from his measurements. It is so important to the speaker that John not include the outside court in his measurements that he again speaks against its inclusion. This other command functions grammatically just like a present time command (negative aorist subjunctive), meaning John was to obey immediately. So, within the vision, the things existing in the present time of the speaker are the temple, altar, worshipers, and the outside court. We know this from the tenses of the commands given to John.

Events Which Have Happened by the Present Time of the Vision

A very significant activity has already taken place from the perspective of the speaker. Again, referring to the outside court, the speaker says, "*it was given to the Gentiles.*" The verb translated as "*was given*" is a simple aorist passive. The tense of this verb indicates that from the speaker's perspective the type of action is a completed whole event. From the time perspective of the speaker, the outside court has already been given to the Gentiles.

That the outside court is in Gentile hands in the present time of the speaker, indicates that the present time of the vision is not the same as when John sees it. When John wrote, around A.D. 90, the temple was already destroyed, torn down, gone. There was no outer-court for the Gentiles to control. The Romans were in command of the entire ruined temple mount, Jerusalem, and most of Israel.

The Timeline of Revelation 11:1-2a from Other Passages

We have already looked at other prophetic passages which add to our understanding of the Jewish Temple area in the time of the Antichrist. Each passage makes our understanding of this time more complete. In this next section, we are going to quickly review the key contributions each passage makes to the first half of the vision in Rev 11:1-3. We may also quickly look at some new points of connection that were not mentioned before. (A more detailed discussion regarding the time of the 70th week from Dan 9:27; any connection that Luke 21 may have with the temple's destruction in A.D. 70; and of the chronology and content of Revelation 11 can be found in Appendix One.)

Daniel 9:27 and the Timeline of Revelation 11:1-2a

In Dan 9:27 Gabriel says that “*the prince who is to come*” establishes a firm covenant with the many. Since the “*one week*” is the last of 70 weeks of years until Daniel's people experience a complete restoration, the covenant involves the Jewish people.

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

Daniel 9:27

Temple Sacrificial Rituals Will Happen in the 70th Week

Among the significant implications of Dan 9:27 is that sacrifice and grain offerings will occur again after Jerusalem and the temple are first destroyed. These offerings are either tolerated or permitted during the firm covenant. Then the coming “*prince*” who establishes

the firm covenant will stop the sacrifice and grain offerings 3 ½ years later.

The Temple is Destroyed After the 69th Week

Before Gabriel even mentions the final or 70th week, he reveals that certain events happen after the 69th week is concluded. Dan 9:26 makes clear that after the end of the second of the three periods of time, the sanctuary (temple) as well as the city of Jerusalem are destroyed.

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Daniel 9:26a

The destruction of the temple occurs after the end of the 69th week of years. Yet there are sacrifices taking place in the 70th week. From these two prophecies, we can infer that secure access to the sacrificial site has been obtained and that it has been purified for such worship by the midpoint of that final 70th week.

Sacrifices Require Another Temple & Altar Like Revelation 11

It seems safe to assume that the resumption of “*sacrifices and grain offerings*” (Dan 9:27) requires an altar where they must be performed. We should also expect that when these sacrificial acts of worship are performed, worshipers will also be present. This means that the setting we find in Rev 11:1-2a is what we would expect to find during the first half of the 7-year covenant of Dan 9:27. There is an altar with worshipers and there is a temple where the sacrifices are found on the altar. If the vision of Revelation 11 reveals events during this final week of years, it would seem reasonable to assume that the altar John is commanded to measure is this necessary altar for these future offerings.

Matthew 24:15-16: A New Temple & the “Abomination”

What was implied in Dan 9:27 is confirmed by Christ himself. The Abomination of Desolation will, at a minimum, involve the holy place of the temple.

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Matthew 24:15-16

Summary: Timeline of Revelation 11:1-2a from Other Passages

Gabriel tells Daniel that the destroyed temple built by Solomon would be replaced by another temple (Dan 9:25). He goes on to say, however, that even this rebuilt temple would be destroyed after the conclusion of the 69th week of years (Dan 9:26). In Matt 24:1-2 Christ also confirmed that the temple of his day, the temple which replaced Solomon's temple, would be destroyed. But he does so after denouncing the religious leaders and publicly implying his own coming death.

During the week before his crucifixion, Christ taught the people in the temple each day. He was repeatedly challenged by the Jewish religious leaders. After a number of such encounters Jesus does what he had not done previously: He denounces these leaders in strong provocative language. After publicly pronouncing 7 'woes' upon them, in which he calls them "hypocrites," "blind guides," "fools," "son(s) of hell," "serpents," and a "brood of vipers," he seems to be publicly anticipating his death when he also says of Jerusalem:

Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say "Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord." And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. And He answered and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

Matthew 23:38-24:2

If his public words in Matt 23:38-39 were meant to subtly indicate his imminent death, then we see that in Christ's mind there was the connection between the death of the Messiah and the destruction of

the temple. This is also what we find in the prophecy of Dan 9:26. The Messiah appears before the end of the 69th week but after the end of the week, he is killed and the temple and Jerusalem are destroyed.

Later in the same chapter, Christ also confirms that the prophesied Abomination of Desolation would occur and that it would involve the holy place of the temple.

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Matthew 24:15-16

A Rebuilt Temple by the Midpoint of the 7-year Covenant

Through this statement, we know that a temple must exist again sometime prior to the midpoint of the firm covenant. Here's the line of thought - 1) Dan 9:26 places the death of the Messiah and the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem after the conclusion of the 69th week. 2) But Dan 9:27 with 12:11 place the time of the temple's Abomination of Desolation at the midpoint of that final 70th week of years. 3) If the temple is destroyed after the end of the 69th week but the temple endures abominations in the middle of the 70th week, then we are moving from a period where there is no temple into one where there is a temple. The temple is destroyed after the end of the 69th week, however, the sacrifices and the abomination happen in the temple in the 70th week. The temple that experiences the Abomination of Desolation during the 70th week cannot be the same one that is destroyed before the 70th week begins.

There is only one way the Abomination of Desolation can occur in a temple during the 70th week of years after the temple was destroyed following the close of the 69th week. The temple must be re-built again. In fact, it must be rebuilt by the middle of the final 7 years. This is when the abomination happens to the temple.

The Altar Used Prior to the Midpoint of the 7-year Covenant

Again, we see that the situation in the vision of Revelation 11 is very

much like the conditions during the 1st half of the 70th or final week of years from Daniel 9. The Apostle John is commanded to measure both the temple and the altar at the same time in Rev 11:1-2. Since there are also worshipers in the temple, we can presume that both the altar and the temple are being used in worship. Dan 9:27 speaks of the regular sacrifice being halted at the midpoint of the 7-year covenant, meaning that prior to this point worship involving an altar would be found in the temple area. The specific mention of all three elements in the vision of Rev 11:12a, is very much like what we might expect during the 1st half of the firm covenant of Dan 9:27. If the vision of Revelation 11 involves the events during this final week of years, then the present time of the vision must be prior to this midpoint. After the midpoint, the sacrifices cease and the temple is defiled.

The Present Time of the Vision

Looking at the tenses used in Rev 11:1-3, we begin to see a chronology or timeline that is confirmed when comparing it to other prophetic passages. In Rev 11:1-2a, John is commanded to measure the temple and the altar. So, they both must exist at the time when John is to measure them in the vision. It would not make sense for John to “*Rise and measure*” items that did not exist. The commands to rise up and measure are given using a present time verb tense.

While giving these two commands the speaker also commands John not to measure the outer court of the temple. John is told twice that he is to leave out the outer court from his measurements. The reason the outer court must not be measured is given using a simple aorist tense, which indicates the speaker views the action or condition as a complete whole. [[24](#)]

The one speaking in this vision sees the giving of the outer court to the Gentiles as a completed act. Whether the outer court comes under Gentile control from an event or through a series of events, the speaker of the vision sees it in its entirety as a whole. Generally, this tense indicates a past completion. [[25](#)] The point for us to observe is that the speaker sees the giving of the outer court as a completed event, not in his future, but by his own present time in the vision.

From the verb tenses used by the speaker in Rev 11:1-2a, we can begin to see the timeline or chronology for this vision. At this point, all we know is that in the present time of the speaker certain things are true. 1) The outer court of the temple is under Gentile control, making it unfit for use in Jewish worship. 2) The altar, the shrine or central building of the temple, and worshipers exist and are to be included in John's measurements.

An Important Question about the Timeline in Revelation 11:1-3

The following is an important question and the answer is becoming clearer: Is it possible that the scene from Rev 11:1-2 depicts events, not from the beginning of that seven-year period, but from the latter half?

And a reed like a measuring rod was given to me, while it is being said, "You must arise and you must measure the shrine (or "temple proper") of God, and the altar, and the ones who are worshiping in it. But you must leave out the outside court of the shrine, and you may not measure it, because it was given to the Gentiles,"

Revelation 11:1-2a [*]

In the present time of Rev 11:1-2a, the temple with its outer court area, altar and worshipers already exist. We also know that this outer court is under Gentile control because the one giving the commands says so. If the temple with its worshipers exists in the present time of the vision, then the only place on the timeline where Rev 11:1-2a could be located is during the 1st half of the firm covenant.

Dan 9:27 and 12:11 reveal that two events will happen at the midpoint of this last week of years. One is the Abomination of Desolation. In Matthew 24 Christ tells us that this abomination happens within the temple. The second event is that the regular offerings, which take place at the altar, cease. After the midpoint of the final 7 years, the temple is defiled and the offerings cease. A defiled temple means no worshipers, and no worship means no active use for the altar. The conditions that we understand to exist on the temple mount after the midpoint of the 70th week of years do not coincide with the elements of

the vision in Rev 11:1-2a. The vision compares favorably with the first half only.

The Timeline for Revelation 11:2b-3 from Internal Indicators

While the chronology of Rev 11:1-2a is becoming clearer, it is already possible to place the events from Rev 11:2b and following during the later stages of the second half of that final 70th week of years. Having elements or activities in the same sentence that may be separated by many years can cause confusion.

As was necessary when looking at vs. 1-2a earlier, a consideration of the verb tenses chosen by the speaker is essential here as well.

But you must leave out the outside court of the shrine (or "temple proper"), and you may not measure it, because it was given to the Gentiles, and they will trample the holy city 42 months. And I will give to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1260 days after they have clothed themselves with sack clothes.

Revelation 11:2-3 [*]

Events That Will Happen After the Present Time of the Vision

We are not told when the outside court was given to the Gentiles. However, for it to be already under Gentile authority in the present time of the speaker, the actual transfer of control most likely happens before the present time of the vision. Also occurring before the vision's present time is the construction of a temple and its altar.

However, the rest of the actions in the remainder of verse 2 and all of verse 3 take place in the speaker's future within the vision. The verb in the phrase "*they will trample the holy city*" from Rev 11:2 is in the future tense. This trampling will happen sometime later from the speaker's perspective. The first verb of v. 3 also is the future tense. There is something else that is new here - it is in the 1st person, "*I will give to my two witnesses.*" In v. 3 the identity of the speaker is revealed. It is Christ. He will give to his two witnesses all they need to fulfill their future ministry. This equipping of his two witnesses is something that he will do later. From the time Christ is speaking to John in the vision, he says that the enabling of these two witnesses is

still future.

Also in the future is the verb of v. 3 *“they will prophesy.”* This short simple sentence succinctly encapsulates all that these two chosen individuals will do when the world is moving from chaos to potential oblivion. They will provide God's message during the time of mankind's greatest rebellion and the world's most severe trials. They will give God's 'take' on mankind's actions and explain how the celestial terrors and terrestrial horrors are God's response. Their ability to perform actions beyond the normal realm of human ability will confirm that their message is coming from God.

There are three future tense verbs in Rev 11:2b-3. Three activities occur after the present time of the vision. *“They will trample” “I will give to My two witnesses.” “They will prophesy.”* These three things are not happening as of the time Christ is speaking. They are yet to occur from the time of the vision - which is before the midpoint of the final week of years.

Contrasting the Actions of the Gentiles and the Two Witnesses

There is an interesting contrast and interplay between the uses of the verb “to give” (δίδωμι). After stating what is given, the activity of both groups is contrasted. The Gentiles tread Jerusalem under their feet, but the 2 witnesses prophesy. Lastly, the length of time for each group's actions is stated - 3 ½ years.

*for it was given (ἐδόθη) to the Gentiles.
and the holy city they will trample
42 months.*

*But I will give (δώσω) to my 2 witnesses
and they will prophesy
1260 days.*

Revelation 11:2b-3 [*]

The same Greek verb is used. The word “authority” is inserted in modern English translations to assist the reader in v. 3. All that the 2 witnesses need will be given to them. Jerusalem will be trampled

underfoot by the Gentiles, but Christ will give to his two witnesses. The Gentiles being where they shouldn't and doing what displeases Christ is contrasted with his empowered witnesses who please him by prophesying. The Gentiles act in trampling Jerusalem occurs at the same time as the two witnesses reveal God's word. The two groups are contrasted. What they do is contrasted. Each group acts at the same time and for the same length of time.

Summary: Timeline of Revelation 11:1-3 from Internal Sources

From the verbs Christ uses in Rev 11:1-3, we are able to discern past events, current conditions, and future actions. The past events include giving of the outer temple court to the Gentiles as well as the rebuilding of the temple and the altar. The present conditions are the existence of the rebuilt temple, altar, the presence of worshipers in the temple, and that the outer court is still under Gentile control. The future actions include the trampling of Jerusalem for 42 months by the Gentiles, the spiritual and supernatural equipping of the two witnesses, and their prophetic ministry for 1260 days in sackcloth.

Everything in the vision of Revelation 11 is accurately portrayed, but Christ's focus is not on the events of vs. 1-3. Rather, the context shows us that he is moving towards the main goal of the vision – the ministry of the two witnesses. These two witnesses, their activities and their effect comprise the bulk of the vision. The first 3 verses are accurately told but are not a comprehensive and complete unfolding of all the events before the two witnesses arrive. The speaker mentions the events in vs. 1-2 to set the stage for the arrival of the two witnesses. So, if some material, like the activities of the Gentiles, is compressed, it is because the speaker is moving us towards the main activity of the vision. However, a more comprehensive unfolding is available by examining other prophetic passages and collating their contributions.

Timeline for Revelation 11:2b-3 from Other Passages

In Matt 24:15-21 and Luke 21:20-24, Christ says that terrible events will precede his return. We have already compared these two passages. There are too many overlapping common points and parallel aspects to see these passages as applying to different series of events.

Christ is describing the same events and period of time. One passage may contain specific prophetic descriptions that would seem to extend the length of time the passage is covering when compared to its counterpart. The differences between these two passages add new details not supplied by the other, but that does not negate the fact that they both share the same main prophetic elements.

The events and time period Christ is describing begin with the *"Abomination of Desolation"* (Matt 24:15), which was first prophesied to Daniel by the angel Gabriel in Dan 9:27 (cf 12:11). These events in Matt 24:15-21 and Luke 21:20-24 are initiated by *"the Abomination of Desolation."* It would occur at the midpoint of those final 7 years, or 3 ½ years after the establishment of the *"firm covenant"* (Dan 9:27, cf. 12:11).

Gentile Actions Found or Confirmed from Other Passages

Our attention should now be drawn to the beginning and ending portions of Luke's passage. At the time of the Abomination of Desolation, the holy city of Jerusalem will be *"surrounded by armies"* (Luke 21:20). In Luke 21:24, Christ explains that these surrounding armies will succeed in capturing and occupying Jerusalem.

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. ... And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:20 & 24

We need to carefully observe the wording of the last portion of Luke 21:24 and compare it to the wording of the last portion of Rev 11:2.

and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:24

and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.

Revelation 11:2b

Gentile Occupation of Jerusalem in Luke 21 and Revelation 11

The Abomination of Desolation and the surrounding of Jerusalem by armies take place in the future. Luke 21:20-24 and Rev 11:1-2 both seem to be referring to that same prophetic event. The same Greek verb (πατέω) is used in both passages. Even though the same verb is translated with slight differences, *“trampling”* and *“treading”* both convey the same meaning. Both passages are concerned with the same Gentile occupation of Jerusalem.

The Length of the Gentile Occupation on the TimeLine

Both passages give the length of the Gentile occupation but do so in different ways. Luke 21:24 - *“until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”* Rev 11:2 - *“for forty-two months.”* Knowing the length of this occupation and that it will continue until the end of the *“times of the Gentiles”* allows it to be placed only during the last half of the final 7-year firm covenant. Christ reveals that the occupation of Luke 21:20-24 is the one that will last until *“the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”* Once this particular occupation begins, it will not end until this period also ends. The end of the *“times of the Gentiles”* will also see the end of this occupation of Jerusalem by Gentile forces. While there have been many different Gentile forces that have occupied Jerusalem since the fall of Judah to the Babylonians, the specific Gentile occupation that Christ is referring to will be one that lasts until this particular period of Gentile control over Israel comes to an end.

It is not likely that the *“times of the Gentiles”* will end before the end of the 70 weeks of years prophesied by Gabriel in Dan 9:24-27. The last 7 years of the 70 weeks of years takes the form of a firm covenant. So, the *“times of the Gentiles”* will not end before this final week of years is completed. Christ informs us in Rev 11:2b that this Gentile occupation lasts for 42 months. Knowing both how long the occupation will last and when it will end allows us to determine when it will begin. This Gentile occupation begins no sooner than 42 months from the end of the final 7 years.

The beginning of the Gentile occupation will occur about the middle of the 7-year covenant. It is not the only significant event to occur at this time. We have previously seen that the Abomination of Desolation which Christ mentions in Matthew 24 also occurs at the middle of this

final 7-year period.

The Implications of the Gentile Activity Involving the Temple

We now have what we need to place the events of Rev 11:2b-3 in their proper chronological position on our timeline - the knowledge that Luke 21:20-24 and Rev 11:2b are describing the same Gentile occupation of Jerusalem, and that Luke 21:24 describes events both connected with and near the time of the Abomination of Desolation. All events described in Luke 21:20-24 begin around the same time as this defining act. Since Dan 9:27 and Dan 12:11 tell us that the Abomination of Desolation occurs at the midpoint of that final 7-year period, then the events of Rev 11:2b-3 can be placed during the last 3 ½ years.

If the future Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel occurs at or near the same time that Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, then this holds important implications for Revelation 11. We can place the beginning of the Gentile occupation at the same time as the Abomination of Desolation.

In Luke 21:24, Christ explains that these surrounding armies will succeed in capturing and occupying Jerusalem. When Luke 21:20-24 and Rev 11:2 are compared, we find that both passages concern Jerusalem. Both involve its occupation by Gentiles. Both refer to this occupation through the evocative image of trampling or treading under foot. Finally, both passages indicate how long this Gentile occupation will last.

If the Gentile occupation of Jerusalem continues until "*the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*" (Luke 21:24), and lasts for 42 months (Rev 11:2), then we can know both the beginning and ending points for this particular Gentile occupation. The end point of the occupation is when Christ comes to grant release to his people. The beginning point would be 42 months prior to this. This places the beginning of the occupation at the middle of the final 7 years.

Both of these events can be placed at the middle of the 7-year firm covenant through independent lines of evidence. The implications of the parallel passages of Matthew 24 and Luke 21 confirm that these

two events, the occupation of Jerusalem by the Gentiles and the Abomination of Desolation in the temple, occur near each other in the middle of the final 7 years.

Presuming these two passages find the fulfillment in the same event means we now have all the information necessary to say that the temple mount will be shared. Here is the line of reasoning and the points of connection between the passages we have been examining. As we have just seen, the Gentile occupation begins about the same time that the Abomination of Desolation occurs in the Jewish Temple. The Abomination of Desolation in Matthew 24, which Christ says is that desolation spoken of by Daniel, occurs 1290 days or about 3 ½ years prior to the end of the final 7 years (Dan 12:11, cf. 9:27). The Gentile occupation of Jerusalem spoken of by Christ in Luke 21:20-24 lasts until "*the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*" (Luke 21:24). Rev 11:2 says that the occupation lasts for 42 months, or again about 3 ½ years. Thus, both the Abomination of Desolation and the beginning of the Gentile occupation occur no earlier than about 3 ½ years before the termination of the final 7 years. Finally, the parallel features that Matthew 24 and Luke 21 share also strongly lead to the conclusion that these two events occur very near each other in time. Both are used by Christ as a signal to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea to drop everything and run for their lives to the mountains.

The sacrifices are stopped in the middle of the 7-year firm covenant (Dan 9:27). The Abomination of Desolation occurs at the same time as the halting of these sacrifices (Dan 12:11). The surrounding and occupation of Jerusalem by Gentile armies also occurs at or very near the time of the Abomination of Desolation. Since the Gentile occupation in Luke 21 is the same seen in Rev 11:2, then it cannot occur until after the midpoint of the 7-year firm covenant.

We have already looked at the verb tenses which locate the giving of the outer temple court to the Gentiles. This occurred before the present time of the vision in Revelation 11. The present time of the vision must be before the midpoint of the firm covenant because there are still worshipers in the temple and an altar presumably in use. The Gentile occupation with its treading Jerusalem "*under foot*" for 42 months is still in the future time of this vision.

All of this means that Gentile control of the temple's outer court is separated in time from when the occupation begins. Seeing this separation in the prophetic passages, during which the sacrifices occur in the temple again, means that the temple mount will know both Jewish worship while the outer courts are in Gentile possession.

Each 3 ½ Year Reference Applies to the 2nd Half of the 70th Week

We can now place the two events from Rev 11:2 & 3, the trampling of Jerusalem for 42 months, and the ministry of the two witnesses for 1260 days, during the last half of the final 7-year period. Some may be surprised to learn that every reference in the Scriptures to this prophetic 3 ½ year length of time can be placed with some certainty during the 2nd half of the final week of years. Rev 11:2 & 3 is, therefore, consistent with every other instance where this prophetically significant length of time occurs.

References to this prophetic 3 ½ year period are found only in Revelation and Daniel. There are 7 specific references to this length of time. They take the form of "*time, times, and half a time,*" "*42 months,*" and "*1260 days.*" These 7 are found in Dan 7:24, 12:7, Rev 11:2, 3, 12:6, 14, 13:5. There are three additional expressions that indirectly specify a time length of 3 ½ years. Dan 9:27 speaks of the 7-year firm covenant being broken at its midpoint followed by desolation and destruction. Dan 12:11 speaks of 1290 days and Dan 12:12 speaks of 1335 days following the Abomination of Desolation, which occurs at the midpoint of the final week of years. While these last two references do not total exactly 3 ½ years, they do reinforce the idea that a period of 3 ½ years will be needed before the persecution will be complete and that this time of persecution occurs after the midpoint of the 7-year period.

Whether one accepts all 10 references or just the specific expressions used 7 times, each use speaks to either the length of the Antichrist's absolute rule, to the length of the persecution he will unleash, or to God's protection through and punishment delivered by his two witnesses during this time (Rev 11:3, 12:14). The 7-year covenant being broken at the midpoint is the only reference to the 3 ½ years made this way (Dan 9:27). Mentioning the 3 ½ years by use of months

is used twice (Rev 11:2, 13:5). Specifying the 3 ½ year period by “time, times, and half a time” is used 3 times (Dan 7:25, 12:7, Rev 12:14). Measuring the period of persecution and protection in terms of days is made 4 times (Dan 12:11, 12, Rev 11:3, 12:6). In Daniel and Revelation, the 3 ½ year period can be seen as occurring after the midpoint of the final 7 years of testing for Israel. If the 2 references in Revelation 11 are taken to be 1st half events, this would be contrary to the continuity that exists between all other references to this significant length of time. [[26](#)]

The Two Witnesses on the Timeline for Revelation 11:2b-3

Those events concerning Christ’s two witnesses in Rev 11:3ff can now be placed with certainty on our timeline. The 1260 days of their prophecy will be the 3 ½ years of that final 70th week of years. For nearly the entire period of Gentile occupation of Jerusalem following the Abomination of Desolation, Christ’s witnesses will provide protection for his true followers, and testimony to counter the arrogant false claims of the Antichrist.

The Timeline of Revelation 11:1-3 Actually Covers Many Years

We divided our examination of Rev 11:1-3 in two. First, we looked closely at vs. 1-2a, including the contribution to these events from other prophetic passages. Then we did the same for vs. 2b-3. When we look at the events described by Christ in Rev 11:1-3, we can see that they are actually separated by years. From the act of giving the outer temple court to the Gentiles, to the armies surrounding Jerusalem and trampling it under foot, to the Abomination of Desolation that occurs very near this occupation, to the ministry and eventual death of Christ's two witnesses - from the first set of events to the last at least 3 ½ years pass. If the witnesses' ministry lasts for 1260 days, and begins after the Abomination of Desolation at the midpoint of the 7-year covenant, then their death and resurrection are near the end of this prophetic week of years.

If the present time of the vision sees the temple and altar still used by worshipers with the outer court already given into Gentile hands, then the first three verses of Revelation 11 cover 3 ½ years at a minimum

and very probably even more.

And a reed like a measuring rod was given to me, while it is being said, "You must arise and you must measure the shrine (or "temple proper") of God, and the altar, and the ones who are worshiping in it. But you must leave out the outside court of the shrine, and you may not measure it, because it was given to the Gentiles, and they will trample the holy city 42 months. And I will give to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1260 days, after they have clothed themselves with sackcloth."

Revelation 11:1-3 [*]

The Temple Mount Will be Shared

We now know that the present time of the vision in Rev 11:1-2a is before the Abomination of Desolation. This means that the events in vs.1-2a must occur before the midpoint of the final 7 years. Understanding that the vision is showing worshipers at the temple after the outer court is given to the Gentiles, allows us to also know that some dual use of the temple mount is occurring. Jewish worship is happening while Gentiles are in control of the outer courts of the temple mount. Whether through official recognition or a confluence of events, this dual usage of the temple mount equates to the temple mount being shared.

CHAPTER THREE

TWO FACTIONS WILL STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THE EMPIRE

At some point after the 10 region confederation is formed, trouble arises within it. Although he is not a ruler over any of the 10 regions initially, later the Antichrist does become a ruler over one of these 10 regions. Additionally, the leaders of 3 other regions are removed by the Antichrist who takes their authority himself. His aggressive actions begin to foretell his future violent role. The confederation's truly weak political structure will become obvious as the world sees the Antichrist in charge of 4 of the 10 original regions. A looming crisis develops when the leaders of the other 6 regions realize that the Antichrist is attempting to seize control of the whole confederation.

When the 10 individual members first join to form this confederated structure, they will certainly do so for the advantage this system of government is expected to provide. However, the Antichrist radically alters the confederation's goal of mutually directed governance. With one individual in effective control of multiple regions, the balance of power becomes dangerously skewed. The advantage of semi-autonomous regions existing side by side with a limited central authority structure evaporates as one individual comes to dominate several of the 10 original regions. The worst fears of its founders are aroused as they see the Antichrist possibly pulling the entire Roman system, and thus much of the world, into a totalitarian regime.

In Chapter Three we will be examining the dominating region. We will

also look at events that will accompany the overthrow of 3 regions. The overthrow will be examined first. Then the nature and activities of the dominating region will be considered.

Subduing of 3 Kings and Their Kingdoms

The conquest of 3 original regions is described in Daniel 7. As we saw previously, this 4th empire is described three times in Daniel 7. Daniel first describes a vision which he had at night. This vision was of four beasts followed by a court scene in which God is the judge (vs. 1-14). When Daniel asks someone from the vision about the last of the 4 beasts he provides us with additional information (vs. 15-22). In response to Daniel's question, even more information is provided about the beast, as well as an interpretation of the vision's symbols (vs. 23-28). The details of this prophecy are so important that Daniel deliberately takes his readers through these future events 3 separate times.

After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; ... And it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts. ... Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking.

Daniel 7:7, 8, 11

I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. ... Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, ... and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates. I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them.

Daniel 7:16a, 19-21

Thus he said: "The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time."

Daniel 7:23-25

The 10 Horns Represent 10 Kings and Their Kingdoms

In the third presentation of Daniel 7, an angel explains the main symbol of the vision. The horns represent "*kings*." Each of the 10 horns represents a separate king. In Chapter One we discussed the nature of the 10 kings' reigns. We realized that the reigns of these 10 kings are contemporaneous with each other. All 10 kings reign at the same time. A fuller understanding concerning the overthrow of these 3 kings and its consequences is essential if we are to understand several significant passages in the book of Revelation.

All three presentations of the other horn's actions are consistent with each other. Yet each gives us information not available from the other two. Thus, the seemingly redundant telling of events in this final phase of the final empire provides us with a basic outline of events and the keys to interpreting this and later prophecies about this time.

The Rise of the Antichrist Who Is Also Called the Other Horn

Another "*king*" appears in the vision. After the original 10 kings are described, we learn about this other king. The individual called the "*other horn*" has other names and titles in Scripture. For consistency, we will usually refer to him as the Antichrist. But here in Chapter Three, we will call him the "*other horn*." This will avoid confusion as we follow the various elements of his rise and career.

Next, we learn that although he starts out weaker than the 10 original kings, he ends up stronger than all of them. When this other horn or

“king” first appears among the 10 it is a little horn (7:8). It is not as strong nor of the same stature as any of the 10. However, this other horn does not stay *“little.”* After removing 3 kings, Dan 7:20 describes the other horn as *“that horn ... which was larger in appearance than its associates.”* Conquering 3 kings elevates the other horn from his previous inferior stature to one which overshadows all the remaining kings. Three different expressions are used in each of the presentations of Daniel 7 to describe the removal of the 3 kings. When these three expressions are combined, a more complete picture emerges regarding this event.

The Other Horn Subdues 3 Kings and Their Kingdoms

In the first presentation Daniel says *“three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it”* (Dan 7:8). In the second presentation, Daniel describes the same event slightly differently: *“the other horn which came up and before which three of them fell”* (Dan 7:20). In the third presentation, the angelic interpreter described the event: *“and will subdue three kings”* (Dan 7:24). Daniel 7 indicates that 3 kings were *“pulled out by the roots,” “fell,”* and were subdued by the other horn.

The first description of pulling out by the roots tells us that none of these 3 kings could possibly return to power. The event surrounding their loss of kingship was such that no return is possible. The second is not as descriptive, yet does confirm the order of these events. The third description is significant for what it says and for what it does not say, *“Subduing”* implies bringing under subjection. Subduing also suggests that while the ability to control their own fate is lost, the regions themselves remain. They are not obliterated but seem relatively intact. Their leaders are different. The 3 regions continue but with the other horn as their leader.

The Subduer - Antichrist

The main emphasis of each presentation in Daniel 7 is not the 10 original horns nor the remaining 7 horns. Rather, the focus of each presentation involves the nature and activities of the other horn. While our main interest in the first portion of this chapter is the other horn's

involvement in subduing 3 of the original 10 horns, the biblical presentation of this other horn must be explored more fully. The topic of this chapter is whether the Antichrist himself becomes a ruler over one of the 10 original kingdoms. In order to look more closely at this question, a more narrowly focused examination of his direct role in removing 3 of those original 10 "kings" is required.

Is the Antichrist One of the 10 Original Kings?

The first question we must answer is whether the other horn himself is one of the original 10. This question is directly addressed twice in Daniel 7.

and behold, a fourth beast, ... and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them

Daniel 7:7-8

Thus he said: "The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, ... As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings."

Daniel 7:23a, 24

In the verses above all 10 horns are already in existence. None of the original 10 kings are described as coming up or arising. None of the 10 horns are described as either growing or shrinking in size. All 10 horns are already present and complete.

Daniel 7:8 presents the arrival of that other horn as a subsequent event to the existence of the 10 original horns. In the angel's explanation of this 4th beast, he provides more direct evidence about the timing of the other horn's arrival. The angel clearly states that the other horn "will arise after" the 10 kings. We see then that Daniel 7 is clear upon the question of whether the other horn is himself one of the 10 original horns. He is not. Clearly, the other horn is not initially presented as one of the 10 horns but is a unique horn distinct from that group of 10.

Does the Antichrist Become One of the 10 Kings?

This brings us to the question: Does the Antichrist, the other horn of Daniel 7, become one of the 10 kings? Our first reaction might be to say no. However, comparisons with other passages seem to indicate that the Antichrist does actually become a king for one of the regions represented by the 10 horns.

The Antichrist is Associated with the Original 10 Kings

While we have just seen that the other horn was not originally one of the 10, this other horn is still associated with them.

While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them

Daniel 7:8a

We should specifically notice the phrase, "came up among them." The other horn arose among the group of the 10. Thus, while clearly not initially one of the 10 himself, the other horn is not completely separate from them either.

The Antichrist is an Associate of the Remaining 7 Kings

After the removal of the 3 other kings, the Antichrist is no longer a "little" horn in comparison to the remaining kings. Rather, now that the 3 kings are gone this other horn is "larger" than the other kings. This disparity in strength is portrayed immediately after the 3 kings are removed. We should also notice that the remaining kings are referred to as "associates." The root of this Aramaic word means "to join, to be in association or league with." [[27](#)] The Antichrist is more powerful than the remaining rulers with whom he is joined. The moment in future history that the angel is describing will occur after the other horn subdues 3 other kings. [[28](#)] However, the use of the word "associates" would still seem more consistent if he were not just a usurper, but one of them himself.

To truly be an 'associate' with the other remaining original kings the other horn would need to obtain kingship over one of the 7 regions that he does not subdue. After he removes 3 of his "associates" he appears larger than them. The Antichrist as the "other horn" would himself then be one of the remaining 7 rulers in the Roman

confederation. The depiction of the “*other horn*” as “*larger*” than these associates would be understandable when we recall that the Antichrist himself would then control 4 of the 10 regions of the Roman confederation.

The Antichrist is a Person

Some may wonder if the “*other horn*” is really just another kingdom. They might doubt that this “*other horn*” should be seen as a personal ruler. However, the other horn is described using human characteristics.

While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, ... and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts.

Daniel 7:8

and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, ... namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, ... I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them

Daniel 7:20-21

As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. And he will speak out against the Most High and will wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7:24-25

In two of the three descriptions of the little horn, there are references to eyes and a mouth that talks. These are human features. Among other things, the symbolism of human characteristics seems to indicate that this other horn is a man, as opposed to a region or an area of political influence. The other horn is a king, not just a kingdom.

The Antichrist Boasts & Wages War for 3 ½ Years

This other horn is also said to be using its human mouth to make great boasts. Dan 7:25 indicates that these boasts will include "speaking out against the Most High." However, the other horn will not be limited just to boastful and blasphemous speech. Dan 7:25 goes on to say that the other horn will "wear down the saints of the Highest One." Dan 7:20-21 also shows that the other horn, whose mouth was "*uttering great boasts*," then follows up by "waging war with the saints and overpowering them." Finally, the length of time during which the other horn will have authority is "*a time, times, and half a time*" (Dan 7:25). The seemingly cryptic phrase actually very precisely equals one year, plus two years, plus one-half year, or a total of 3 ½ years.

What Daniel 7 Tells Us About the Antichrist

The observations we should currently carry forward from Daniel 7 are that the other horn, while not then one of the 10 kings, is still in the same group with them when he appears. After he subdues 3 of these 10 kings, the other horn is then said to be a larger horn than the remaining ones. Then the other horn and the remaining kings are called "*associates*." The other horn is also described as having human characteristics, namely "eyes like the eyes of a man," and a mouth which speaks. The other horn makes great boasts, which are followed by aggressive actions against the saints of God, resulting in the saints being overcome. The total length of time this other horn will have authority to accomplish these things is 3 ½ years or 42 months.

The Wounded Head of Revelation 13:3 is a King

So far, our attention has been limited to Daniel 7. However, other passages provide even more information as we answer the question of whether the Antichrist becomes a ruler of one of the 10 original regions.

And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. ... And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.

Revelation 13:1b, 3

In Chapter One we saw that the same "*beast*" is found in three

different prophetic passages. Daniel 7, Rev 13:1-10 and Revelation 17 all discuss this final ruling power. Since the three prophetic passages are describing the same ruling power, what is revealed in one passage augments what we learn from the other two. When the angel in Rev 17:9-10 informs the Apostle John that the 7 heads of the beast are kings, we can apply this knowledge to other questions about the makeup of the empire.

The seven heads are ..., and they are seven kings.

Revelation 17:9,10

We know that the head which was wounded and which recovered in Rev 13:3 is one of the 7 kings of the ruling empire because we are told that the heads are kings in Rev 17:9-11. When Rev 13:3 indicates that one of the 7 heads receives a fatal wound from which it recovers, a consistent interpretation is to regard this wounding as occurring to one of the 7 kings referred to in Rev 17:9-11.

The wounded head of Rev 13:3 is also then, one of the 7 kings of Rev 17:9-11. There remains the task of determining if this same wounded and recovered king is the “other horn” of Daniel 7. To examine this question further we must look more closely at Revelation 13.

Revelation 13 Mentions the Wounding & Recovery 3 Times

Verse 3 is not the only reference to the wounding and recovery of the beast. Both are actually mentioned 3 times in Revelation 13. The 2nd and 3rd references are found in a portion of the chapter where an assistant “beast” (who is called the False Prophet in Rev 19:20) is introduced.

And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. ... And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. ... And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

Revelation 13:11, 12, 14

Revelation 13 contains 3 references to the wounding and recovery of the beast (vs. 3, 12, 14). Clearly, the wounding and recovery are central to the false ministry of the False Prophet in Rev 13:11-18.

The King's Wounding & Recovery Initiates a Series of Events

Further reflection on Rev 13:1-10 also reveals how central these wounding and healing events are to the development of the beast.

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, ... And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Revelation 13:3-4a, 5-7a

Notice the progression. There is a fatal wound to one of the 7 kings. However, after dying, the king returns to life. The whole earth marvels. The worldwide amazement turns to worship of both the king who is resurrected and the dragon who seems to have facilitated the recovery of life. As the king and the dragon are worshiped, a mouth speaking arrogant and blasphemous words is given to the king, who also is given 42 months of authority to act. The blasphemy is directed against God and those who dwell in heaven. His blasphemy progresses from words to action as the king who is worshiped makes war upon the saints of God, and overcomes them.

The wounding and supernatural resurrection of one of the 7 kings plays a central role in the development of the beast, and also plays a central role in the ministry of the False Prophet, as both are portrayed in Revelation 13.

The Wounded & Recovered King Ascends to Greater Power

From Revelation 13 it seems clear that the king or “head” that is

fatally wounded and resurrected is an individual who goes on to have a dominant role in the empire that the beast represents. The ascendancy of this king is seen from the unfolding of events that follow his fatal wounding and resurrection, and from the prominence that they seem to play in the ministry of the False Prophet.

Life, Death & Resurrection in Revelation 17

The raising of the dead king to authority over other kings is also seen in Revelation 17. The imagery is different from what we saw in Revelation 13, but the meaning is the same. The imagery used in each of the three references follows this theme - the beast was, and is not, and is coming. The three references in Revelation 17 to this death and resurrection are so integral to the text where they appear that the entire passage should be read together.

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

Revelation 17:7-11

"Was" refers to a past condition in which the beast was alive. "Is not" refers to the beast not being alive in that present moment of time. "Is coming" refers to the beast being alive again in the future. The motif of "was, and is not, and is" carries the same meaning as having a fatal wound and unexpectedly being raised from the dead.

The "Marveling" of the World Connects Revelation 13 & 17

In Rev 17:8 the angel uses this motif to reveal that an important

person will be resurrected from the dead. In this same verse, the angel tells the Apostle John that everyone in the whole world, except those who belong to Christ, will marvel over this beast. The emphasis in Rev 17:8 is very similar to what we found in Revelation 13.

The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

Revelation 17:8

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, ... And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Revelation 13:3-4a, 8

The Wounded King is the 8th King and One of the Previous 7

The third reference using the motif of “was, and is not, and is” can be found in Rev 17:11. After each of the 7 kings has served their turn in leadership and surrendered authority, the text speaks of an 8th king. This 8th king is identified two different ways. He is first identified by means of the same motif “was, and is not, and is.” Then the 8th king is identified as being “of the seven” kings.

And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

Revelation 17:11

The 8th king to serve after the last of the 7 heads or kings have completed their terms in authority, is identified as being both one of the 7 himself and the same one who was fatally wounded and who also unexpectedly is raised out of death. The 8th one to have authority is not unknown, he is one of the 7 previous kings. Further, Rev 17:11 identifies this 8th king as the same king who received a fatal wound

and then re-emerged into life.

The Antichrist's Rise in Revelation 13, 17 & Daniel 7

Rev 17:11 gives us two ways to identify this last king. First, he is killed and returns to life. Second, he is the 8th ruler, having been one of the former 7. These two ways of identifying this one individual are consistent with Rev 13:3. Both Rev 17:11 and Rev 13:3, are about an individual who is one of the 7 kings represented by a “head,” who is also fatally wounded and raised up. Both Rev 17:11 and Rev 13:3 present these two aspects of this individual's identity. However, Rev 17:11 then goes on to show this individual as being a ruler who serves after all 7 terms of the previous kings are completed.

The three references in Revelation 13 and the three references in Revelation 17 are about the one ruler, from a group of 7 rulers, who receives a deadly wound and returns to life. This allows us to identify the wounded king of Rev 13:3 with the 8th and final king of Rev 17:11. The six references in Revelation 13 and 17 confirm that the identity of the fatally wounded head of Rev 13:3 is the same individual who eventually also reigns again as the 8th king of Rev 17:11. Both prophecies are about the same person. The wounded head of Rev 13:3 is the 8th ruler of Rev 17:11.

In Chapter One we were introduced to the idea that the 8th king in Rev 17:11 will reign for 42 months. In the description of the beast from Rev 13:1-10, the length of time the beast is authorized to act is also given as 42 months.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Revelation 13:5-7a

This description of the beast in Rev 13:5-7 in many respects parallels the activities of the “other horn” in the three presentations provided in Daniel 7.

While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, ... and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts. ... Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking

Daniel 7:8, 11a

And the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates. I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them.

Daniel 7:20-21

As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. And he will speak out against the Most High and will wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7:24-25

The main points about the other horn which we observed in Daniel 7 can now be compared to these passages from Revelation.

The Slain King is Human

The other horn of Daniel 7 is presented with human characteristics, namely “*eyes like the eyes of a man,*” and a mouth that speaks. The six references in Revelation 13 and 17 to one of the 7 kings being fatally wounded, (Rev 13:3, 12, 14; 17:8a, 8c, 11) is consistent with this point about the other horn from Daniel 7. The other horn in Daniel 7 is a man, one that can see, speak and be killed just like any other man.

The Slain King is an Associate of the Other 6 Kings

Daniel 7:20 describes the other horn as larger than his associates after he subdues 3 of the 10 original kings. The term “*associate*”

seems to place this other horn on the same level as the kings he did not subdue. He is one of them. Rev 13:3 says that one of the 7 heads had a fatal wound. One king receives a deadly wound that his 6 associates did not.

The Slain King Talks Blasphemously Against God

The other horn from Daniel 7 speaks out “*against the Most High.*” He then follows with such violence that the saints of God are overcome. The other horn’s actions in Daniel 7 are clearly mirrored in the portrayal of the beast in Rev 13:5-7.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; ... And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name ... And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Revelation 13:5a, 6a, 7a

The Slain King Will Have 42 Months of Authority

The total length of time the other horn from Daniel 7 will have authority to accomplish his blasphemies, murders, and other destructive actions is listed as 3 ½ years, which is about 42 months. This also is clearly mirrored in the Rev 13:5-7 passage.

And authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God.

Revelation 13:5b-6a

Evidence That the Antichrist Is the Slain King from 3 Passages

In summary then, the 8th king of Rev 17:11 reigns for 42 months and is also clearly identified as one of the 7 previous kings who is killed and who returns to life. These dual identifiers connect this 8th king to the wounded head or king of Rev 13:3. The knowledge that this 8th king maintains authority for 3 ½ years connects him directly to the other horn of Dan 7:27.

The connection of the other horn of Daniel 7 with the wounded and raised up king of Rev 13:3 is further confirmed through the two other main points we have observed from Daniel 7. The first point dealt with

the humanity of the other horn. Daniel 7 says the other horn possesses “eyes like the eyes of a man,” and a mouth which could speak. The other horn of Daniel 7 is described with characteristics that conveyed his full humanity. We also saw that the other horn is an associate with the other kings he did not subdue. In fact, while he is an associate with them, he is now larger than them.

The other horn of Daniel 7 can also be connected with the fatally wounded and resurrected king of Rev 13:3 in that he speaks out against God and then makes war against God’s people. This is mirrored in Rev 13:5-7. Look at how very similar these two texts are, the Old Testament passage of Daniel 7, and the New Testament passage of Revelation 13.

And the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, ... namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates. I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them.

Daniel 7:20-21

As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, ... And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, ... and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7:24a, 25

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, ... And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Revelation 13:5-6a, 7a

The Daniel 7 passages are clearly describing the other horn. The Revelation 13 passage is describing the same actions using extremely similar language. The context of Rev 13:1-10, especially Rev 13:3ff, would seem to be strongly implying that vs. 5-7 are describing the actions of that killed but resurrected king from the group of the 7 kings.

The connection is very strong between the other horn of Daniel 7 and the slain and raised up king in Rev 13:3. This allows us to conclude that the other horn of Daniel 7, the wounded but resurrected ruler from the group of 7 kings of Rev 13:3, and the 8th king of Rev 17:11 are all the same individual.

The Antichrist Will Become a King Over One of the 10 Regions

The previous review and comparisons, while laying the foundation for other proofs about the Antichrist in the chapters to come, here were aimed at answering the question: Does the other horn of Daniel 7 become one of the 10 kings? In Revelation 13 one of the 7 non-subdued rulers receives a fatal wound and lives. This same ruler goes on to receive worship. He blasphemes God. He rules for 42 months during which time he overpowers the people of God. These same activities were seen in Daniel 7 as those of the other horn. But in Daniel 7 this other horn wrestles control of 3 regions away from their original rulers and rules them himself. However, in Revelation 13 the wounded ruler is one of the seven remaining rulers.

That the other horn of Daniel 7 and the wounded head of Revelation 13 are the same person is confirmed when we compare the list of their terrible actions and the length of time they will be allowed to perform them. Therefore, the other horn of Daniel 7 must be the fatally wounded head of Revelation 13 who regains life. In Daniel 7 he is not depicted as one of the original 10 rulers, however he is included among the 7 remaining rulers in Revelation 13. This leads to the surprising conclusion that, while not one of the 10 original rulers, he becomes a ruler over one of these regions sometime later.

The other horn of Daniel 7 is the same king who is wounded, and who is one of the 7 kings of Rev 13:1-3. The other horn who rises in prominence after the establishment of all 10 original horns is now known to become one of the 7 kings of Rev 13:1 and Rev 17:3 & 7. Sometime after the other horn's arrival among the group of the 10, he attains kingship over one of the original 10 regions.

The Significance of the Heads & Horns of the Beast

How are we to understand the 7 heads and 10 horns of Revelation 13

and 17? How do both compare to the 10 horns of the beast in Daniel 7? The meaning and relationships of the heads and horns on these beasts were considered in Chapter One. We looked at other prophetic creatures with multiple horns and multiple heads in Daniel's other visions. These other prophetic visions with their multi-horned and multi-headed creatures were interpreted for Daniel by angels, one of whom was Gabriel. What we learned in Daniel about these prophetic creatures helps us understand the meaning of the beast's heads and horns in Revelation 13 & 17.

The presence of a horn on a creature in this type of prophetic structure represents a king, and a king must have a kingdom or region to rule. The presence of a head represents the decision-maker who exercises authority over a region. That decision-maker or "*head*" being separate from other such "*heads*" seems to indicate that they exercise their authority over their regions with some independence from each other. The regions they rule are autonomous or semi-autonomous in nature.

So, a prophetic creature with multiple horns represents multiple kingdoms or regions within the overall structure of the empire. Similarly, a creature with multiple heads represents multiple decision-makers or "*kings*" whose authority is used to govern their regions. Again, perhaps more simply stated, a horn represents a kingdom, but a "*head*" represents the king governing that kingdom. When there are multiple horns, an empire has more than one "*kingdom*" within itself. When there are also multiple heads and horns, the empire has multiple "*kings*" ruling its multiple kingdoms.

An interpretation of the 7-headed & 10-horned creature from Rev 13:1-10 and Rev 17:3 & 7, which is consistent with the guides provided in the texts of Daniel by their respective angelic interpreters, would see this phase of the beast having a governing structure where the 10 horns represent 10 regions (or 'kingdoms') operating at the same time with each other, and where the 7 heads are semi-autonomous decision-makers ("*kings*") controlling and directing the 10 kingdoms. At this phase of the beast's governing structure, since there are more horns than heads (more kingdoms than kings), it means one "*head*" or king controls more than one kingdom or "*horn*."

Why 7 Heads But 10 Horns?

The three presentations of this beast from Daniel 7 provide an answer to how many regions are being controlled by each decision-maker. Initially each kingdom is controlled by its own king. Thus, in the initial portrayal of the beast it had just 10 horns. Each kingdom is controlled by its own king and exercised its power at the same time and alongside the other nine kingdoms. However, each of the three presentations of the beast in Daniel 7 describes how 3 horns are subdued or removed by the other horn who rises later.

The image of the beast in Rev 13:1-10 and Rev 17:3 & 7 explains just what was subdued or removed. The 3 horns that were removed by the other horn were kings or rulers who directed their region's power. When the other horn of Daniel 7 subdued 3 horns, he removed their independent decision-making ability, taking that function himself. This is why the image of the beast in Rev 13:1-10 and Rev 17:3 & 7 continues to have 10 regions represented as 10 horns, but 3 less decision-makers or kings represented as 7 heads. When the other horn of Daniel 7 removed the separate decision-making ability of 3 regions, he reduced the total number of such decision-makers from 10 to 7.

The Antichrist's Kingdom is Not One of the Three Subdued Regions

We can now see that the other horn, who is the Antichrist, becomes a ruler or "*king*" over one of the original 10 regions. We also know that this other horn removes the rulers of 3 regions, taking their decision-making ability himself. This raises the question - Which happens first? Does the other horn become a regional king and then later subdues 3 fellow rulers? Or is the order of these two events the reverse? Are there indications to assist the reader in answering this question?

Someone might think that the answer is easily solved by envisioning the other horn becoming a ruler in place of one of the 3 "*kings*" he removes. This answer seems obvious at first. The Antichrist as the other horn is able to subdue 3 regional rulers. He would then himself become the ruler over all three regions. In this option the two events seem simultaneous, with the elevation to regional kingship directly following his removal of the 3 rulers.

However, while this option at first seems to easily answer the question, there are significant problems. Under this scenario there would be 8 regional rulers not 7. Revelation 13 & 17 both clearly show the empire (the “*beast*”) composed of 7 regional rulers. Yet, if the other horn simply elevates himself over one or more of the 3 regions he subdues, then there would be the remaining 7 rulers, plus the regions now controlled by the other horn, which makes 8 rulers in total.

Revelation 17:11 does speak of a ruler in addition to the previous 7 rulers. But the very next line in that verse says that this 8th ruler is “*out of the seven.*” The 8th ruler must be one of the 7 who were just listed in the previous verse. This means that the only way the Antichrist can be the 8th ruler is if he was also one of the 7.

We can easily recognize that something more must be involved for the Antichrist to become a ruler of one of the remaining 7 regions. He cannot simply elevate himself over the 3 regions he subdues. This scenario does not result in the conditions the prophetic texts describe. While a tempting answer, this scenario is incomplete. At some point in time he must become a ruler over one of the 7 regions also.

Scripture Does Not Reveal Which Occurs First

So, we are still left with the same earlier question - Which happens first, the subduing of 3 regions, or the elevation of the other horn as ruler of his own region? There is not enough information to know the answer. We cannot know the timing of an event for which the prophetic message reveals only its result but not its chronology or means of occurring.

Comparing the prophetic revelations of Daniel 7, Revelation 13, and Revelation 17 has shown that the other horn does become a ruler in the confederation for one of the 7 regions he does not subdue. As we read these passages we see the result of his elevation but not when or how.

It is possible to imagine circumstances which would allow one or the other scenario to arrive at the same result demonstrated in the prophetic message. One scenario might seem more likely, given how

the reader understands that message now. However, this does not negate the real possibility that the fulfillment of the message might occur in ways not foreseen today. Since multiple chronologies are possible from the perspective of the prophetic message, none can be definitively eliminated.

The other horn's ascendancy to kingship will be an event that happens after the establishment of the original 10 kings. We know this because Daniel 7's vision shows all 10 horns existing before the other horn even arrives. The prophetic message is clear that the other horn subdues 3 regional rulers, and that he becomes a regional ruler for one of the other 7 regions he does not subdue. While the timing of these two events is not revealed, we can be certain that the other horn does not become a regional member only over the regions he subdues, because this would require the beast to have 8 horns instead of the 7 shown in Revelation 13 and 17.

Chapter Three Summary

Paragraph Three of the proposed scenario describes the domination of 3 of the 10 original region members. Examination of this event from the relevant texts of Scripture was not involved and did not consume the majority of this chapter. Rather, the bulk of this chapter was devoted to the concept that the other horn of Daniel 7 at some point would become a ruler of one of the 10 original kingdoms or areas of power. This was to demonstrate the validity of the following phrase from Paragraph Three:

Eventually, one who will be a ruler over one of the 10 original regions subdues 3 other members ...

As we have discovered, the other horn will become a ruler over one of the 10 original regions, and he will move aggressively against 3 of his fellow rulers. This region is the domain of the aggressive other horn who has ascended to the leadership position in this region through unspecified but possibly indisputable means. Each of the three presentations of Daniel 7 portrayed the other horn as being involved in subduing or dominating 3 of the 10 original horns or kings. The last of the three presentations of Daniel 7 leaves no doubt that the other horn is directly involved and responsible for the domination of the 3 regions.

It is not known whether the Antichrist becomes a regional ruler before or after he subdues 3 other regions. We can know that after both events have occurred the Antichrist will then be the ruler or decision-maker over 4 regions - the 3 regions he subdues and the region he rules as its "king." We can also be assured that at some point the Antichrist, who is now a regional "king," is fatally wounded but unexpectedly recovers. This wounding and recovering would more likely occur after his subduing of 3 other kings than before, for reasons that will be considered later.

After all of the 7 remaining kings, including himself, have served their term in the rotation of the supreme executive position over the confederation, the Antichrist, who was one of the 7, and who was wounded but raised up, becomes the 8th king to rule. The length of this

reign is given in Dan 7:25 and Rev 13:5 as 3 ½ years or 42 months. During this time the Antichrist progresses from blaspheming God to murdering God's saints. The significance of the activities covered in this chapter involving the other horn will become apparent in later discussions.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ANTICHRIST WILL BE THE SIXTH SUPREME EXECUTIVE

The Antichrist himself is installed as the 6th supreme executive. As the office of the supreme executive is rotated through the confederation's regions, the term of the Antichrist's powerful region comes up 6th in the rotation. The 7th regional power to exercise the authority of the supreme executive is neither the Antichrist's region nor any of the 3 other regions he controls.

We first looked at Rev 17:9-11 in Chapter One. We saw that this passage deals with a series of rulers who come one after the other and that these rulers are representatives of their respective regions.

Under the original structure of the Roman confederation, each region would have its representative serve a term as the supreme executive. The rotation of each region through the supreme executive position would ensure that no one region gains dominance or permanent advantage in the affairs of the confederation. Each ruler is to serve in turn as the supreme executive for a fixed term. At the conclusion of each term, the supreme executive is to pass to the next region's representative. Thus, as originally conceived there would have been 10 terms, after which the rotations might begin over again.

Why Only Seven Rulers are Mentioned in Revelation 17:9-10

Only 7 kings are mentioned in Rev 17:10. The Antichrist or other horn of Daniel 7 effectively throws the original plan for shared leadership into chaos by removing the rulers of 3 regions. After the Antichrist subdues 3 of the 10 rulers and places their authority under his own

control, there are only 7 rulers remaining who have undisputed claims to a term as the supreme executive. While all 10 rulers were originally intended to serve their respective term as the rotating supreme executive, the actual portrayal of only 7 rulers serving in Rev 17:10 is the result of the Antichrist's brazen attempt to hijack the intended power sharing arrangement.

The Sixth Ruler of Revelation 17:10

In Chapter One we saw that the other horn of Daniel 7, the wounded ruler of Rev 13:3, and the 8th ruler of Rev 17:11 are in fact the same individual - the Antichrist. The Antichrist is also the 6th ruler. In this next section, we are going to see how we know that.

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction."

Revelation 17:7-11

The angel who speaks to the Apostle John in Revelation 17 is explaining the meaning of John's vision in which he sees a woman sitting on a scarlet beast (v. 3). The angel must, therefore, introduce the woman, whom he calls "*the great harlot*" (v. 1), explain the nexus between the harlot and the beast, and how the beast reacts to the harlot.

The Angel's New Information in Revelation 17

During the angel's explanation, he provides additional information concerning the evolution of the beast that was not previously given.

That the beast would have 7 heads, or 7 decision-makers was known from Daniel 7. The 7-headed beast is first introduced in Revelation 12:3, where the beast is identified as a red dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns. We next find this beast in Rev 13:1-10 where further infamous activities are described. Then, lastly, the beast is presented in its relationship with the harlot in Revelation 17.

We have come to understand that as the beast evolved from the original 10 semi-autonomous regions, the number of the decision-makers or “*kings*” would be reduced by 3 to a total of 7. We also understand this change to be the direct result of the aggressive actions of the Antichrist as prophesied three times in Daniel 7.

Which of the Rotations is Held by the Future Final Ruler?

What is new in Rev 17:10 is the angel’s message that the 7 heads also participate in a rotation of the central authority role. Combined with the new information are strong clues about which rotation is held by the Antichrist. In Rev 17:8-11 we find out which of the 7 heads is the Antichrist and which rotation among the 7 is his: The angel reveals that the Antichrist is the 6th supreme executive. The same individual who is the other horn of Daniel 7, the individual who becomes a ruler over one of the 10 original regions, the ruler who subdues 3 other regions, the fatally wounded but recovered ruler, the individual who eventually ends up as the final 8th ruler, serves his term as the supreme executive 6th in the rotations.

The Antichrist will exercise the authority of the supreme executive office 6th in order. Later he regains ruling authority as the 8th ruler. When the former 6th supreme executive regains authority as the 8th ruler, he gathers to himself all the power of the revived Roman Empire. It is at this time that he is the “*beast*.”

The Terms used to Identify the 7 Rulers in Revelation 17:10

There are three complementary indicators given by the angel in Rev 17:8-11 which clearly identify the 6th ruler as the future Antichrist who will also be the 8th ruler. The first indicator concerns the words used to identify the 7 rulers.

*And they are seven kings, **the five fell, the one is, the other did not yet come, and whenever he comes it is necessary for him to remain a little while.***

Revelation 17:10 (emphasis added)

Three different sets of words are used of the 7 rulers in Rev 17:10.

The five

The one

The other

Since the first 5 rulers are grouped together, we know that none of those 5 are being set apart by the angel for further description. The field of 7 is, therefore, immediately reduced to 2 possibilities.

The angel refers to the last ruler as "*the other*" in contrast to the 6th ruler who is called "*the one*." As we consider these two designations, "*the one*" and "*the other*," it would seem much less likely that the angel would choose to highlight a ruler for further description by referring to him as "*the other*." The 6th ruler is called "*the one*." When we consider the descriptions for the other six rulers - "*the five*" and "*the other*," the designation of "*the one*" seems most likely to draw our attention, while the others seem most likely to dismiss the remaining 6. Thus, the first indication used by the angel to highlight the 6th ruler is the way he is described when compared to the other 6.

How the Present Time Reference Identifies the 7 Rulers

The second indicator is taken from the implicit present time reference in Rev 17:10. In this verse, the present time is during the term of the 6th ruler. At that point in time, the previous 5 rulers have served, the 6th ruler is currently serving, and the reign or term of the 7th ruler is still in the future.

And they are seven kings, the five fell, the one is, the other did not yet come, and whenever he comes it is necessary for him to remain a little while.

Revelation 17:10 [*]

By speaking as if the present time period, the 'now' of this verse, is

during the term of the 6th ruler, the angel provides us with the second of his indications.

How the Existence Indicator Identifies the 7 Rulers

The third indicator considers the existence or absence of each ruler as the angel describes them in v. 10. The angel describes the first 5 rulers as being collectively absent because they “fell.” The 7th ruler is also described as being absent because he has not yet arrived. Only the 6th ruler is described as existing in the present time of v. 10. This condition of the rulers, either existing or absent, will be referred to as the Existence Indicator. This is the third indication provided by the angel to identify which of the 7 rulers still has more history to fulfill and thus deserves further attention.

The Angel's Elegant Literary Patterns

The Time Reference and Existence Indicators are part of the angel's elegant literary presentations. These presentations are found in Rev 17:8a, 8c, 10, & 11. These four verses contain four statements from the angel using the same literary pattern or template, each containing the same elements which are used very similarly but with a few crucial differences. An accurate interpretation and application of these four verses must account for the elegant structure through which the angel communicates his message.

Meaning is communicated through a linguistic structure. The meaning of any passage or phrase cannot mean something other than what it means within the immediate context of its literary structure. Therefore, the literary patterns of Rev 17:8a, 8c, 10, & 11 must be thoroughly understood if we are to properly understand the angel's fully intended meaning in this pivotal passage. In Rev 17:8a the beast is described in the following way:

Intro	<i>"The beast that you saw"</i>
Line 1	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	<i>"and is about to ascend up from the abyss"</i>
Line 4	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

Revelation 17:8a (author's translation)

The angel uses an introductory phrase to identify the subject followed by four descriptive lines that combine together to portray the beast. At the end of v. 8, the angel repeats this template using the first three descriptive lines. While the meaning of these descriptive lines in Rev 17:8 is important, currently we should focus on the literary clues they provide.

The Literary Presentations in Revelation 17:8a, 8c, 10, 11

The literary template of Rev 17:11 contains nearly the same introductory statement followed by four descriptive lines. The template in v. 11 is also concerned with the identity of that 8th and final ruler.

Intro	<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	<i>"is himself also an eighth and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)

The only variation between the four descriptive lines in v. 8a and v. 11 involve the dual phrases in the third line of 17:11. The angel changes the third line and by doing so he gives us crucial information regarding the identity of this individual. This third line is a compound because it actually contains two phrases.

New Information: An 8th Ruler Who Is One of the Previous Seven

The literary clues can be more clearly defined by considering the two verses of 17:8 and 11 together. In vs. 8 & 11, the statements

introducing the subjects and three of the four descriptive lines are very nearly identical. However, the third lines in both verses are very different. Even though the words and meaning of the third lines are not identical, their usefulness as literary clues is not diminished. Rather, it is enhanced.

Intro *"The beast that you saw"*
Line 1 *"was"*
Line 2 *"and is not,"*
Line 3 *"and is about to ascend up from the abyss"*
Line 4 *"and into destruction he goes."*
Revelation 17:8a (author's translation)

Intro *"as they see that beast that"*
Line 1 *"was"*
Line 2 *"and is not,"*
Line 3 *"and will come."*
Revelation 17:8c (author's translation)

Intro	<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	<i>"is himself also an eighth and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>
Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)	

New Information: Which of the Previous 7 Will Be the 8th Ruler

These descriptions in the four lines of Rev 17:8 & 11 serve dual purposes. First, they tell us that the individual who was wounded and recovered is responsible for the blasphemous aggression against God and his people (v. 14a). Second, the descriptions themselves also set up a pattern, and by doing so provide literary clues which aid us in identifying this future world ruler.

Explanations of the Literary Patterns in Revelation 17

There are four very skillfully prepared templates within our area of

main interest in Revelation 17. They are found in vs. 8a, 8c, 10, & 11. As we will discover, the templates in vs. 8a & 8c have points of strong connection with the template in v. 11. The template of v. 10 is different in structure and meaning, but it is not so different that the shared pattern between all four templates is broken. Verse 10 also has points of strong connection with v. 11. Thus, v. 11 has strong connections with vs. 8a & 8c, as well as v. 10. The elements that form these two connections are very different. These two connections with v. 11 impose interpretational forces upon the meaning of this verse. This means that obtaining the message the angel intended to communicate by means of these 4 templates requires an interpretation that successfully incorporates these two very different but very strong connections with v. 11.

The Existence and Time Reference Indicators

Do you remember learning to ride a bicycle and trying to figure out how all the different parts worked together (balancing, steering, pedaling, braking, leaning in the turns)? If you were like me, it probably seemed you would never figure it out. But after a while, the bike stayed upright. All the different parts just came together. In time, you stopped thinking about the different parts and just rode your bike. It is sort of like that with elements that make up these four literary templates. The explanation of how all it works may seem daunting (not to mention tedious). So, if you don't immediately grasp this next section, don't get bothered. It will become much clearer as we move forward.

Each of the four descriptive lines in both vs. 8a & 11 tell us whether the beast is there, or is not there. Perhaps, more simply stated, each descriptive line indicates whether the beast is present (E), or absent (A). The 'existence' indicator is the way each of the four descriptive lines tells us whether the beast is present and existing or absent and non-existing.

The four descriptive lines also use a second type of indicator. This second indication refers to the time perspective of each line. Each line refers to either the past, present, or future. The second descriptive line is the present time within the template of each verse. The other

lines describe events or conditions before (past) or after (future) those of the second line.

The first line for both vs. 8 & 11 refers to the past, in that the events or conditions of the first line occur before the time of the second. The second line in both vs. 8 & 11 refers to the present or the 'now' of that template. The third and fourth lines both refer to the future, with the third line referring to the near future, and the fourth line referring to a more distant future within the template.

How the Two Indicators Are Used in Revelation 17:8 & 11

All four lines in Rev 17:8a & 11 employ both indicators. The first indicator refers to the existence or absence of the beast, and the second refers to the time period of that existence or absence.

		Existence Indicator	Time Reference Indicator	
				<u>Revelation 17:8a (author's translation)</u>
Intro				<i>"The beast which you saw"</i>
Line 1	E	Past		<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present		<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near		<i>"and is about to ascend up from the abyss"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant		<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

				<u>Revelation 17:8c (author's translation)</u>
Intro				<i>"as they see the beast that"</i>
Line 1	E	Past		<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present		<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future		<i>"and will come."</i>

				<u>Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)</u>
Intro				<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	E	Past		<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present		<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near		<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant		<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

Each first line in vs. 8a, 8c, and 11 shows that the beast will exist (E) in the past. The second line in each of these three verses shows that

the beast will be absent (A) in the present. The third lines show that the beast will again exist (E). Both vs. 8a & 11 have the third line referring to the near future, while the fourth lines show that the beast will again be absent (A) in a more distant future. The third line for v. 8c describes how the beast will exist again in a generic future.

How the Two Indicators Are Used in Revelation 17:10

These four descriptive lines along with the introductory phrases form an easily recognizable pattern or template. The fact that this pattern is repeated exactly in the two separate verses of Rev 17:8 & 11 gives us a high degree of certainty that these verses do in fact contain these templates. Having established the pattern of these introductory phrases and the four descriptive lines in vs. 8a & 11, in which the fatal wounding, unexpected recovery, and ultimate destiny of the beast is stylistically described by the angel, we can now examine v. 10 which also contains the same pattern elements.

Intro	<i>"and they are seven kings"</i>
Line 1	<i>"five fell"</i>
Line 2	<i>"one is"</i>
Line 3	<i>"the other did not yet come"</i>
Line 4	<i>"but whenever he does come it is required that he remain a little."</i>

Revelation 17:10 (author's translation)

A cursory examination of v. 10 with v. 8a, and also v. 11 will reveal the nearly identical overall structure of these three verses. In all three verses, there is a short phrase which introduces the subjects of the template, followed immediately by the four descriptive lines.

The four descriptive lines of v. 10 use the same existence and time reference indicators that we saw in vs. 8 & 11. Each of the four lines indicates whether the subject of that line is present and existing, or is absent and not existing. Each of the four descriptive lines also refers to either the past, present, or future. Both types of indicators in the four lines of v. 10 operate just as they do in vs. 8 & 11.

Existence Indicator			
		Time Reference Indicator	
			Revelation 17:10 (author's translation)
Intro			<i>"and they are seven kings"</i>
Line 1	A	Past	<i>"five fell"</i>
Line 2	E	Present	<i>"one is,"</i>
Line 3	A	Future Near	<i>"the other did not yet come"</i>
Line 4	E	Future Distant	<i>"but whenever he does come it is required that he remain a little."</i>

The Similarities Create the Literary Pattern

Literary patterns, by their very nature, do not occur randomly or by accident. The repetition of similar or identical items forming a pattern demonstrates thoughtful intent. When a reader happens upon such repetitions, he understands that these patterns were intentionally created. As we encounter them in vs. 8, 10, and 11, we know that their author constructed them as a unique literary vehicle to better communicate his message.

The Differences Draw Our Attention to Crucial Information

Similarities in the patterns are instructive, but so too are the differences. Differences that are not so great as to break the pattern may indicate crucial information in the author's message. The author may use differences within the patterns to highlight what may be most important to his message, knowing that the reader will perceive the differences in the patterns more acutely.

Just as a single red rose stands out among a bed of yellow roses, so a difference within a carefully crafted literary pattern stands out in the perception of the reader. While the similarities create the pattern, the occasional difference creates the mechanism for conveying some of the most essential components of an author's message.

Similarities & Differences in the Patterns of Revelation 17

The differences or variations in the patterns of vs. 8 & 11 contain important information and is confined to the third descriptive lines. All

of the other descriptive lines are identical, which creates the pattern. So, the difference in the third position naturally draws our attention.

There are also differences between the pattern we find in Rev 17:8 & 11 and the pattern of Rev 17:10. In vs. 8 & 11 the subject is the beast, and the message centers around his fatal wounding and unexpected recovery. However, the order or polarity of the 'existence' indicators in the pattern of v. 10 is reversed, creating differences within the pattern. In v. 10 the subject is the 7 rulers and the intended message is to identify which of them will become the ultimate ruler. To communicate this message, the angel speaks of the first 5 rulers as fallen or absent in past time. The angel then speaks of the 6th ruler as existing in present time. He then speaks of the 7th ruler as being absent in the near future, but as existing in a more distant future.

In the patterns of vs. 8a, 8c, and 11, the "beast" is the subject and he is not absent in past time (line 1), nor in near future time (line 3). While in v. 10, the 7 rulers are absent in past time (line 1), and in near future time (line 3). Again, in vs. 8a, 8c, and 11 the "beast" is absent in present time (line 2), and in distant future time (line 4). Yet the 7 rulers in v. 10 are not absent in present time (line 2), nor in the distant future time (line 4).

Existence Indicator			
		Time Reference Indicator	
<u>Revelation 17:8a</u> (author's translation)			
Intro			<i>"The beast which you saw"</i>
Line 1	E	Past	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near	<i>"and is about to ascend up from the abyss"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

<u>Revelation 17:10</u> (author's translation)			
Intro			<i>"and they are seven kings"</i>
Line 1	A	Past	<i>"five fell"</i>
Line 2	E	Present	<i>"one is,"</i>
Line 3	A	Future Near	<i>"the other did not yet come"</i>
Line 4	E	Future Distant	<i>"but whenever he does come it is required that he remain a little."</i>

			<u>Revelation 17:11</u> (author's translation)
Intro			<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	E	Past	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near	<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

Interpreting the Literary Pattern of Revelation 17:8

When the angel communicates that the beast would be fatally wounded, he uses the second line of the patterns in both vs. 8 & 11. This second line indicates the existence or absence in the present time. That the Antichrist would be killed and his life removed for a period of time will also be a clearly identifying feature. The beast is identified as the one who is absent in the present time in the literary pattern in 17:8 & 11. The subject of the literary pattern in v. 8 is the beast (Antichrist) who, though existing in the past and again in the future, does not exist in the present time of the pattern (line 2).

Interpreting the Literary Pattern of Revelation 17:10

Similarly, when the angel identifies which member of the 7 rulers will become the ultimate and final ruler in v. 10, he also uses the second line, which contains the events or conditions in the present time of the pattern. However, in this pattern, unlike vs. 8 & 11, the existence indicator is positive. The ruler who would be fatally wounded is identified in the pattern of vs. 8 & 11 by his absence in present time. The opposite literary choice is made by the angel in the pattern of v. 10. He portrays the 6th ruler as existing in present time, while the other rulers are all absent. The only ruler who exists in the present time of v. 10 is the 6th ruler. The way the angel uses the existence and time reference indicators in v. 10 has the literary effect of drawing a red circle around this 6th ruler, marking him as the individual who will be described further in the verse that follows.

Interpreting the Literary Pattern of Revelation 17:11

By highlighting the 6th ruler in v. 10, the angel tells us who is being described in v. 11. The angel again draws the reader's attention by

varying his literary pattern in the third line. In this third line, the angel describes how the previously highlighted 6th ruler *“is himself also an eighth”* ruler. The angel then continues on to confirm that the 6th ruler *“is out of the seven.”*

Through his literary skill, the angel creates an elegant yet simple pattern in which one of the 7 rulers is mortally wounded but unnaturally recovers and who also becomes the 8th ruler. Thus, this seemingly cryptic passage can now be seen as a clever delivery system for crucial information, which obscures its message from the casual reader but discloses it to the persistent seeker.

Summary: Initial Survey of the Patterns in Revelation 17:8-11

We are gaining an appreciation for the literary artistry used in Rev 17:8-11 and that appreciation will only grow as we move forward. However, the angel artfully prepared these verses because they contained essential information that he wanted his readers to grasp. There is much more in these verses than a display of creative literary skill. The literary patterns themselves assist in delivering the message. So, what should we be able to take away from these verses at this point of our examination?

The Antichrist is the 6th Supreme Executive & the 8th Ruler

In Chapter Three we observed that: (1) the other horn of Daniel 7 becomes a ruler over one of the original 10 regions through a process not specifically described in the texts, (2) that the other horn, the Antichrist, is also the mortally injured but recovered ruler of Rev 13:3, (3) and that the Antichrist is also the 8th ruler of Rev 17:11. They are all the same individual, and their activities are all those of the Antichrist. We can now also conclude that this same individual is also the 6th in the progression of rulers presented in Rev 17:10. We know this from the angel's message in Rev 17:11:

*And the beast which
was
and is not,
is himself also an eighth,*

*and is out of the seven,
and into destruction he goes.*

Revelation 17:11[*]

The angel states that the 8th ruler is out of the group of the previous 7 rulers. The angel also identifies which of the 7 previous rulers becomes the 8th and final ruler in v. 10. Through the existence and time reference indicators, the angel indicates that the 8th ruler was also the 6th ruler. The Antichrist is the 6th ruler to serve in the supreme executive position of the central authority for the confederation.

Since we know that the other horn of Daniel 7 and the 6th of 7 rulers of Rev 17:10 are the same individual, then we also know that the Antichrist is the ruler who subdues 3 of the original 10 regions. The Antichrist is the other horn of Daniel 7 and the 6th and 8th rulers in Revelation 17.

The 7th Supreme Executive

The 7th ruler to serve as the supreme executive of the confederation cannot be the Antichrist. The 7th member would also most likely not be a representative from the 3 subjugated regions for two reasons. First, a dispute over the legitimacy of the 3 subjugated members would likely result in the position being filled initially by only the 7 undisputed rulers. During any attempt to resolve the dispute, the confederation would most likely allow the supreme executive position to be filled only by those rulers who have an unquestioned right to a term. By progressing through the 7 legitimate rulers first, the confederation might hope to secure more time to solve the dispute and avoid further aggressive actions by the Antichrist.

The second reason that the 7th member would most likely not be one of the representatives for any of the 3 subjugated regions is that it is probable that the Antichrist himself would occupy the supreme executive position for any of these 3 regions. One reason the Antichrist will subdue the rulers of 3 other regions might be to gain influence in the political structure of the Roman confederation. If so, it would then seem counter to his own interests and motivations to allow another individual to represent any of the regions he dominates. If the Antichrist would not allow another to occupy a position of power that

he could fill, and if his own term of executive authority is 6th in the progression, then it would not be consistent with Rev 17:10 to have the Antichrist succeed himself as the 7th ruler representing one of the 3 dominated regions. Therefore, it would seem consistent to view the first 7 rulers of Rev 17:10 as being the undisputed legitimate rulers. Since Rev 17:10 identifies the 6th ruler as the Antichrist, then it would seem to follow that the 7th ruler is neither the Antichrist nor one who represents any of the 3 subjugated regions.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ANTICHRIST LIVES, DIES, AND LIVES AGAIN

The Antichrist is killed in a violent attack. However, the fatally slain ruler of the dominating region, the 6th supreme executive, the Antichrist, is miraculously resurrected back to life during the authority of the 7th supreme executive. This victory over death amazes the world's people, who see the resurrected Antichrist as a god.

We previously explored the idea that the Antichrist would eventually become a ruler over one of the 10 original regions in the confederation. In Chapter Four we discovered which rotation among the 7 rulers will belong to the Antichrist. He will be the 6th to serve as the supreme executive for the confederation. We have also seen that the Antichrist would be the fatally wounded but raised up ruler of Rev 13:3.

The Subjects of Chapters Five and Six

The next two chapters attempt to answer two questions. First, does the wounding of one of the heads of the beast, which we now know to be the Antichrist, really result in an actual physical death? Second, when does this wounding and recovery occur? The question of whether the Antichrist really dies is the focus of Chapter Five. The question of when the wounding occurs to the Antichrist is examined in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five is itself divided into two portions. The first contains a review of the relevant passages. Looking at these passages again will

refresh the context and our perspective. The second deals with the question of whether these passages really provide evidence that the Antichrist does in fact die, and if so whether his healing is a resurrection back to life.

Reviewing the Relevant Passages

Two passages deal separately with the issue of whether the Antichrist actually dies physically and, therefore, whether he is actually resurrected back to life - Revelation 13 and Revelation 17. In Revelation 13, there are three references to the fatal wounding and unexpected recovery of the individual we now know to be the Antichrist. He receives this wound sometime after he has become a ruler over one of the 10 original regions, and after he has subdued 3 of his fellow rulers. Sometime after the original 10 rulers have been reduced to 7, the same individual who is the other horn of Daniel 7 will become the mortally injured and unnaturally recovered member.

Revelation 13:3

The first of the three references in Revelation 13 to the wounding is found in v. 3.

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, ... And all who dwell on the earth will worship him,

Revelation 13:3-4,8a

As we explored previously, the reference to one of the heads being fatally wounded refers to one of the 7 remaining kings. There are at least two pieces of evidence that we can observe from these verses.

The First Observation from Revelation 13:3

The wound is described as fatal and yet the ruler recovers. The question about whether this ruler actually experiences death and is resurrected will be examined in the next portion of this chapter. Some might wonder whether the words “*as if it had been slain*” in Rev 13:3 are intended to mean that the head only appeared to be slain, but did

not actually die. We will examine this issue a little later. For now, we should concentrate on the statement that the wound was mortal, a fatal wound, a wound expected to produce death.

The Second Observation from Revelation 13:3

The second observation is that following the 'healing' in Rev 13:3, the population at large seems to regard the recovery as miraculous. The passage immediately moves from descriptions of the recovery to the amazement and worship of both Satan and the recovered ruler. The masses would not worship someone if they thought he had recovered from a wound through natural processes or medical intervention. However, the mass worldwide worship of the Antichrist would seem much more probable if they believed he was healed supernaturally.

Revelation 13:12

The second reference in Revelation 13 continues this understanding. Beginning in Rev 13:11 we are made aware of a supporter and promoter of the Antichrist. Rev 19:20 calls him *"the false prophet."* This individual certainly appears to have the authority to act on behalf of the Antichrist. In Rev 13:12, this promoter uses his authority to compel *"the earth"* into worshiping the Antichrist. Our interest for now, however, is the reason why.

And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

Revelation 13:12

It seems clear that the worship of the Antichrist is based on the perception that his fatal wound was healed through non-natural means. The initial worship that was a spontaneous reaction to the supernatural healing is made compulsory by the *"false prophet"* and is strictly enforced. Divinity of some degree is conferred upon the Antichrist on the basis of the miraculous healing from the fatal wound.

Revelation 13:14

In Rev 13:14, we gain further insight into the cause of the fatal wounding.

And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

Revelation 13:14

The wound, which twice before is called a fatal wound, is referred to here as “*the wound of the sword*.” The wounding of the Antichrist is the result of an intentional act with a deadly weapon.

The Wounding and Healing in Revelation 17

Revelation 17 is the second passage that refers to the fatal wounding and the miraculous healing of the Antichrist. Just as there are three specific references to the wounding in Revelation 13, there are also three specific references to both the fatal wounding and the miraculous healing of the Antichrist in Revelation 17. There are six references in total to the fatal wounding and supernatural healing of the Antichrist in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 17:8a, 8c, & 11 Use the Same Literary Template

The three references in Revelation 17 are all very similar to each other but are very different from those in Revelation 13. As was discussed in Chapter Four, the three references in Revelation 17 all appear in the form of elegant literary patterns. The first two references both occur in v. 8. The third reference is in v. 11.

	<u>Revelation 17:8a (author's translation)</u>
Intro	<i>“The beast which you saw”</i>
Line 1	<i>“was”</i>
Line 2	<i>“and is not,”</i>
Line 3	<i>“and is about to ascend up from the abyss”</i>
Line 4	<i>“and into destruction he goes.”</i>

Revelation 17:8b (author's translation)

"And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,"

Revelation 17:8c (author's translation)

Intro *"as they see the beast that"*
Line 1 *"was"*
Line 2 *"and is not,"*
Line 3 *"and will come."*

Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)

Intro *"And the beast which"*
Line 1 *"was"*
Line 2 *"and is not,"*
Line 3 *"is himself also an eighth,
and is out of the seven,"*
Line 4 *"and into destruction he goes."*

Common Features Between Revelation 17 and Revelation 13

In these verses, the wounding and healing of the Antichrist are presented to us much differently than in the three references from Revelation 13. Yet we can be certain that the same individual is being referred to by comparing Rev 17:3 & 7 with Rev 13:1. In both passages, the subject is referred to as a *"beast."* The beast in both passages has 10 horns and 7 heads. Even though the language depicting the wounding and healing is different, the reaction of the entire world is the same.

In addition to both passages describing the world marveling at the wounding and healing of the Antichrist, they both also state that another group of people will not be amazed nor worship him. Rev 13:8 and Rev 17:8 clearly state that there will be only one group of people who will not marvel nor worship the newly healed Antichrist.

And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Revelation 13:8

And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,

Revelation 17:8b [*]

Having one's name in the book of life will keep that one from being deceived into worshipping the newly healed Antichrist.

We can, therefore, be certain that Revelation 13 and 17 are describing the same individual. There is a "*beast*," which has 10 horns and 7 heads, and which receives the wonder and worship of the entire world, except for those whose names are written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. These are all common features between Revelation 13 and 17, and they afford us great certainty that these two passages are referring to the same overall authority and those who arise within it, to the same individual and to the same experience of mortal wounding and supernatural healing back to life.

Questions about "The Beast" in Revelation 13

We have seen many times now in both Revelation 13 and 17 that the beast is described initially as a multi-headed multihorned creature. Then this "*beast*" ends up seeming to represent only one individual.

In Chapter One, we saw six points of connections between the 4th beast of Daniel 7 and the beast of Rev 13:1-10. This demonstrated that the beast of Rev 13:1-10 is the 4th beast of Daniel 7, which represents the Roman Empire. In Rev 13:3, one of the 7 heads is fatally wounded and healed. From the progression of events in Rev 13:1-10, it is evident that the beast also progresses. The 7 heads of the beast in Rev 13:1-2 represent 7 decision-makers or rulers. However, even though only one of the 7 heads is fatally wounded and healed, it is the beast that is worshiped in Rev 13:4. Authority to act for 42 months is given to the beast in Rev 13:5. In Rev 13:6, the beast has a mouth speaking blasphemous things against God. In Rev 13:12, the False Prophet

compels worship of the beast who was mortally wounded and lives. Note that this verse does not refer to just one head of the beast being fatally attacked. In v. 12, it is the beast itself that sustains critical injuries and lives. In Rev 13:14, the same emphasis is observed. The False Prophet causes an image to be made of the beast *“who had the wound of the sword and lived.”* Rev 13:14 does not say that one of the 7 heads was wounded by the sword. The verse says that the beast was wounded and lived.

So, is the beast the multi-headed creature of Rev 13:1-2? Is the *“beast”* of Rev 13:1-10 representing the Roman Empire or only the one who is worshiped? Is the *“beast”* representative of many individuals or just one?

Questions about “The Beast” in Revelation 17

The same progression from the beast representing many, to the beast coming to represent only one, is also seen in Revelation 17. In Rev 17:3 & 7, the beast is described as the familiar 7-headed & 10-horned creature. However, in Rev 17:8b, the same language is used which was also used in Rev 13:3-4 & 8 in which the beast is worshiped seemingly as an individual. In Rev 17:10-11, the 7 heads of the beast are shown to represent individual rulers who exercise authority consecutively, with the *“beast”* being singled out as an 8th ruler. In Rev 17:3 & 7, the *“beast”* is the multi-headed multi-horned creature. Yet in Rev 17:10-11, the beast is spoken of as the one who follows the 7 rulers in exercising authority. In Rev 17:12-13, the 10 horns, which were themselves part of the beast in 17:3 & 7, are said to represent kings who *“give their power and authority to the beast.”*

Can the 10 horns of the beast really give their authority to the beast? Can the 7 heads of the beast be followed in authority by the beast? In Rev 19:20, the *“beast”* is said to be *“thrown alive into the lake of fire”* along with the False Prophet. Can the *“beast”* really be an empire? Is the beast the 10-horned & 7-headed creature of Daniel 7, Rev 13:1-2 and Rev 17:3 & 7? Or is the beast the one individual of Rev 13:3-8, 12, 14 and Rev 17:11 & 13? Is the *“beast”* representative of many or of one? Does the beast represent an empire or an individual?

What or Who is the Beast? - A Proposed Solution

Surprisingly, the answer to each of these legitimate questions is Yes! The beast progresses or evolves during the exercise of its power. It begins as the collective influence of many, but in the end, all of its authority rests upon only one.

When multiple passages, connected by common descriptive elements, speak of the beast as the 4th empire to have authority over Israel, then this aspect must be included in our understanding of what the “*beast*” represents. Daniel 7 describes the 4th beast which is known from the perspective of history to be the Roman Empire. The elements of the beast that did not materialize during the past history of the Roman Empire will do so in the future history of that empire. When we read that the beast represents one individual, then this also must be a part of what the “*beast*” represents.

The Same Beast is Both Many and Then Only One

Those who have quarreled over whether the beast represents an empire or an individual have failed to account for the dynamic of time. They have failed to account for the development of that “*beast*” through time. The “*beast*” is always descriptive of the power or authority that rules its territory and its people.

We are told three times in Daniel 7 that the 4th beast will at some point consist of 10 rulers. We know that this structure of the beast is still a future manifestation of Roman power because it was not part of its past history. This future structure of the 4th empire will consist of 10 regions or areas that are joined or federated together. Daniel 7 also explains that another horn gains control over 3 of those 10 original regions, reducing the total to 7. The “*beast*” at this point consists of 10 regions but only 7 decision making rulers. The people in its territory are under the earthly authority of this evolving aspect of the “*beast*” even while the configuration of that ruling authority changes again.

In Rev 13:3, one of the 7 rulers is fatally wounded but then miraculously healed. This miraculous healing elevates this one ruler over the 6 others. This risen ruler is elevated to the status of deity in the minds of most of the world’s population. In Rev 17:11, this

miraculously healed ruler succeeds in becoming the “*beast*” who rules 8th in order. The individual 8th ruler is called the “*beast*” because he himself is effectively the total governing power or authority of the empire.

The “Beast” is the Empire’s Authority

Through the evolution of the governing structure forced by the aggressive actions of the Antichrist, those who are represented by the title “*beast*” dwindle as power is consolidated in fewer and fewer until it comes to rest upon just one. The “*beast*” which was representative of a revived Roman Empire of 10 regional members, quickly evolves to just 7 members controlling the 10 regions. Eventually the title “*beast*” applies to just one individual, who is the wounded but healed Antichrist, controlling all 10 regions. These 10 regions under this healed member “*give their power and authority to the beast*” (Rev 17:13).

Thus, we are correct in identifying the “*beast*” as representing a reconstituted Roman Empire of 10 ill-joined members. We are correct in identifying the “*beast*” as the one individual who is mortally attacked but miraculously healed, who rules for 42 months, speaks blasphemously of God, makes war upon the saints, is worshiped under the order of the False Prophet, and of whom an image is made. This “*beast*” eventually “*goes into destruction*” (Rev 17:8a, 11, cf 19:20).

In summary, the term “*beast*” is used to represent the governing authority whether in the form of the pre-dormant phase of Rome’s rule or in the form of the dictatorial rule of the Antichrist. Those who are covered by the term “*beast*” change as the structure of that governing authority changes over time. The governing authority of the “*beast*” first appeared as the successor to Greece in the distant past. Its final form will consist of the installation of the Antichrist, as the 8th ruler of the re-assembled Roman power (Rev 17:11,13). The term “*beast*” refers to the continuity of authority as that power is controlled by different people over time.

John Strains to Describe His Vision

In this portion of Chapter Five, several of the original Greek words will

be examined. However, no one need feel intimidated since each word or phrase will be defined and its meaning in the passage explained.

Many times in the book of Revelation the Apostle John is describing a vision. In his visions, he sees the types of things a person would never ordinarily see. So, to communicate the unique nature of what he sees, John must discover and use words which have meaning in the minds of his readers, but that also accurately convey the sights and sounds of his visions.

What John actually sees is not exactly like what he describes. Not having personally witnessed the vision, we can only draw upon our own experience and imagination as stimulated by John's words. Since the Apostle cannot communicate exactly what he sees, he communicates the vision with as much accuracy as language will allow. Yet, knowing the inadequacy of his words to exactly communicate what he sees in his vision, John includes comparative language so we can have both a clear sense of the vision and its meaning while also knowing that its true intensity and exact depiction will remain beyond us.

We should not despair, however, of ever gaining the intended purpose of the vision, even if we are unable to obtain its exact depiction. John's purpose in relating his visions is pointless if we are unable to attain a sufficient perception of the things John witnessed. The sufficiency of John's descriptions is reinforced by repetition and variations in expression so that through multiple exposures our understanding of John's vision is sharpened.

The First Sentence in Revelation 13:3 - The Injury

A reader might take the English words "as if" in this verse to mean that there was only an appearance of being slain, but not an actual killing.

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.

Revelation 13:3a

The Greek word translated "as if" or "seemed" is the adverb ὥς.

However, the use of ὥς by John should not be taken as uncertainty or doubt about the reality of the violence done to this head. [[29](#)]

The Greek word ὥς in such visionary contexts should be understood as more of an 'equals sign.' John uses ὥς to equate what he sees with language people can understand. John uses ὥς this way twice in the preceding verse of Rev 13:2. The feet of the beast are ὥς of a bear, and the mouth of the beast is ὥς of a lion. The feet are "*comparable to*" bear feet, and the mouth is "*comparable to*" a lion's mouth. We sense no doubt that John means that the beast's feet are really comparable to bear feet, or that the beast's mouth is really comparable to a lion's mouth. We feel no uncertainty about how the beast's feet and mouth generally looked to John in his vision. The use of ὥς in Rev 13:3 should be understood and translated in the same way. In John's vision ὥς should be translated as "*comparable to*" or "*like*."

The Use of σφάζω - "slay"

In Rev 13:3, John sees "*one out of the heads*" of the beast "*comparable to having been slain unto death*." John's choice of the three Greek words which immediately follow ὥς presents a powerful image. He sees one of the 7 heads so damaged that he compares it to "*having been slain unto death*."

The Definition of σφάζω - "slay" is Distinctive

The Greek word translated as "*having been slain*" is formed from the verb σφάζω and carries the specific definition of "the killing of a person by violence." [[30](#)] This particular Greek verb, when used of the killing of people, conveyed a killing of unusual barbarity. The Greek σφάζω is built upon the Greek stem σφαγ from which words like φάσγανον - "knife or sword" are formed. [[31](#)] The Greek historian Herodotus, who lived from about 484 to 435 B.C. used the verb σφάζω for a profane, shocking, and grisly killing. It conveyed gruesomeness, an undeserved fate, criminality, the murder of a relative, and the mass killing of a city when it was conquered by

soldiers. Josephus, a Jewish historian who chronicled Jewish history and Rome's conquests in the 1st-century A.D., used σφάζω and the related word of ἀποσφάπω for grisly and illegal killing. [[32](#)]

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, σφάζω very often is used to convey the violent and remorseless slaying of people. In the vision of Revelation 6, the martyrs seen under the protection of the heavenly altar in connection with the breaking of the fifth seal are slain, σφάζω, because of God's word and their testimony (Rev 6:9). It is used 4 times in Revelation to describe the violent death of Christ. In 3 of these uses Christ is portrayed as a lamb *"having been slaughtered."* The verb is used twice in 1 John 3:12 to describe the violent killing of Abel by his own brother Cain. In Rev 6:4 men are described as slaying one another as a result of peace being removed from the earth. The connotation of violent killing is evident in the Greek verb σφάζω.

The Tense of σφάζω - "slay" is Instructive

The tense of the verbal use of σφάζω is also instructive. The Greek word translated as *"having been violently slain"* ἐσφαγμένην is in the perfect tense. With the Greek perfect tense, the writer understands that even though the action of the verb is complete, some aspect of its results or consequences is still active in the present. The action of the verb is viewed as completed but not its force or impact.

The type of action represented by the Greek perfect tense reflects the status of the verb's completion in the view of the writer. For example, if a text states *"a sick man has been given medicine"* then the action of consuming the medicine is completed. However, the result of the medicine may not have reached full effect. Even though the sick man has taken the medicine, it may be hours or days before it makes him well. If a Greek writer chooses to place his present time at the point after the action of the verb is complete and before its result is exhausted, then the Greek perfect tense is likely to be chosen.

The Apostle John pairs this participle with the perfect tense so that his readers will understand that though the violent killing happened in the past, it nevertheless has force in the present time of the vision. The

three uses of the verb to describe Christ as the slaughtered Lamb of God in Revelation are also in the perfect tense. There is a present continuing force that results from the past completed violent death of Christ.

John does not intend that the past killing of that one head of the beast should be taken by the reader as a completed event with no further consequences. If this had been John's intention, he could have used the aorist tense which views the action of the verb as a completed whole. On the contrary, John's use of the perfect tense in reference to the head's violent slaying provides us with a clue that this past completed action carries import into the present time of John's vision.

The Use of εἰς θάνατον - "into death"

The definition of the verb σφάζω is itself amply descriptive of a violent killing. Yet to this John adds two more words which illustrate even further the nature of what he sees when he looks at this one head. Even though these two words are unquestionably present in the original Greek text of Rev 13:3, modern English translations seem to pass over them. John says that the head looked *"comparable to having been violently slain εἰς θάνατον"* literally *"into death."* This redundant aspect of his description is intentional. The Apostle states that the one head was *"comparable to having been violently slain into death."* Not being able to communicate the exact vision he sees, John is still able to communicate that the damage is so extensive that its result is death.

Summary of the First Sentence in Revelation 13:3

By use of these four words - ὥς ἐσφαγμένην εἰς θάνατον, John enables us to sufficiently perceive the essential nature of this aspect of the vision. One of the heads was comparable to having been violently slain into death in the past, but the force of that killing continues into the present time within the Apostle's vision.

The Second Sentence in Revelation 13:3 - The Recovery

John's description of this aspect of the greater vision continues in the second sentence of Rev 13:3. In describing what happens next to this head, John gives an additional description concerning the damage. He

calls the extensive damage ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου "*the wound of death*." The wound is the result of a strike or blow whose origins John will detail later.

Use of ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου - "the wound of death"

This wound is described as being τοῦ θανάτου, meaning the wound is one "*of death*." It is a mortal wound, a fatal wound. The wound is one that kills. John tells us that one of the 7 heads of the beast is comparable to having been violently killed into death by a fatal wound.

The Reason for Perfect Tense of σφάζω

The second sentence of Rev 13:3 also provides the reason for John's curious use of the perfect tense to convey the damage he observes. When one reads that a death has continuing force even after the event of dying, it is generally assumed that this continuing present force, whatever it may be, cannot be directly found in the extinguished life. The exception, as noted before, is Christ. The verb used to describe the killing of the Lamb of God is also in the perfect tense, "*having been slain*." Salvation is available today as a result of the present continuing force of the past completed act of Christ's sacrificial death. John's use of the perfect tense to describe the one head "*being comparable to having been violently slain into death*" is explained in this second sentence of Rev 13:3. The reason this dead head continues to exert some force after its death is because the dead head is no longer dead.

The contrast could not be more striking. The head, which suffered a fatal wound, is healed! This "*wound of death*," "*the fatal wound*," is no ordinary wound. In fact, it is a wound that should not have been healed at all. Yet, in stark contrast to the terrible damage which the head suffered, it is healed. The head which was dead is now alive.

Recovery or Resurrection?

A question might remain before a reader about whether the healing of Rev 13:3 occurred to a dying head or to a dead head. Is the Apostle describing a healing from a state of death or from a state of dying? We should not come to any conclusions prematurely, but rather allow the

full exposure of the biblical texts to inform us. [33] Certainly, the very strong language used by John as he describes his vision leaves little doubt that the extent of the wound is expected to result in death for the ruler. We must consider the state of that ruler prior to its healing, but we must also consider the reaction of the world after the healing.

Continuing on in Rev 13:3-4, John explains that *“all the earth was marveling after the beast,”* and that they worshiped both the dragon and the beast who received the dragon’s authority. The worldwide astonishment and worship followed this healing of the *“fatal wound,”* and is likely the reason for it. The astonishment of the world and the deification of the beast confirm that a completely unexpected healing is the essential nature of John’s vision of Rev 13:3.

The Strong Language of Revelation 13:3

In Rev 13:3, the Apostle uses a verb in the perfect tense that carries the specific definition of “the violent killing of a person.” To this, he adds the redundant words εἰς θάνατον - *“into death,”* which was caused by ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου - *“the wound of death.”* This is all contrasted with the worldwide astonishment and spontaneous worship of the masses after the wound is healed. When we consider the strong language used to tell us these things, we can begin to feel the intensity of the passage, but we should still reserve judgment for now about whether this head of the beast actually died.

Compare & Contrast Reactions to Healing - Revelation 17:3 & 8

Having revealed that the whole world is astonished and worships the beast after the healing of the fatal wound (13:3-4), John states again for a second time that the beast will be worshiped by all those living on the earth (13:8), except for one specific group.

And they will worship him, all who are living upon the earth whose name has not been written in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain from the foundation of the world.

Revelation 13:8 [*]

Everyone whose name is not written in the book of life will worship

the Antichrist. The Apostle's description of this book is important. The book is described as *"the book of life τοῦ ἀρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου"* - *"of the Lamb who has been violently slain."* The Apostle is introducing new elements that provide us with perspective and contrast.

Compare & Contrast the Slain Antichrist and the Slain Lamb

With the appearance and activities of the Antichrist fresh in our mind, the Apostle places Christ before us as well. John intends for us to contrast these two men. Both are described by the same tense of the same verb - *"as having been violently slain"* (ἐσφαγμένος) and both are alive afterward. Both receive worship while condemning the worship of the other. However, while one is called *"the Lamb,"* the other is called *"the beast."* One is worshiped by all in heaven and some on the earth, the other receives no worship in heaven but is worshiped by the masses on the earth.

Compare & Contrast the Followers of Antichrist and the Lamb

Those who worship the Lamb who *"has been violently slain"* do not worship the Antichrist who *"has been violently slain."* The Antichrist and no doubt, many of his followers, *"make war"* upon those who worship the Lamb (Rev 13:7), and blaspheme God, his Name, and those who are in heaven. The reaction which heaven expects from the followers of the Lamb is given by the Apostle in Rev 13:9-10 and is in stark contrast to the murderous aggression of the Antichrist and his followers.

If anyone has ears let him hear.

*If anyone is destined into captivity
into captivity he goes.*

*If anyone by a dagger is to be killed
he, by a dagger is to be killed.*

Here is the steadfastness and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 13:9-10 [*]

When the followers of the Lamb find themselves the objects of the tyrannical persecution resulting from the Antichrist's war upon them, rather than accept the forced worship of the Antichrist, the followers of the Lamb will meet their fate with faith and faithfulness intact. The

contrast we are intended to see is that though the Antichrist makes war upon the followers of the Lamb, they will not make war upon the Antichrist or his followers.

Those future followers of Christ are reminded in Rev 13:9-10 that attempting to defeat the beast cannot succeed. That which has been prophesied about the Antichrist and his followers will come to pass. Whatever people freely choose to do in that future time will bring about what has been previously revealed to us. So, while they may resist and try to evade the forces of the Antichrist, since their ultimate fate is secure in Christ, they are already assured of final victory (Rev 15:2-4). However, whether they resist, flee, or surrender, they continue to maintain their testimony and allegiance to the Lamb.

Death or Dying in Revelation 13:12?

After describing his vision of the first beast along with those verses contrasting the beast with the Lamb (Rev 13:8-10), the Apostle then places a second vision before us. This second vision concerns another beast who promotes and enforces the compulsory worship of the first. In relating his second vision, John provides two more references dealing with the question of the Antichrist's death and return to life.

And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he causes the earth and those who are dwelling on it so that they will worship the first beast, of whom was healed his wound of death.

Revelation 13:12 [*]

1st Element of Rev. 13:12 - The Wound is to the "Beast"

There are four elements in this verse which we should consider. First, we should observe that, unlike the clear statement of v. 3, here in v. 12 the healed wound of death is not to one of the 7 heads of the beast. According to Rev 13:3, when the fatal wound was inflicted it was suffered by one of the 7 rulers making up the governing power. In v. 3, one of the 7 heads of the beast is violently slain with a wound of death. However, in v. 12 it is the beast itself that suffers the wound of death. This seeming conflict is again resolved when we recall how the dynamic of time works upon the changing governing structure of the

“beast.”

Rev 13:12 involves a later period of time than Rev 13:3, a time when that healed ruler from the group of the 7 becomes the single individual invested with the full governing authority of the beast. That governing power ultimately comes to rest on only one individual - the same individual who is fatally wounded and healed. We should not be surprised when the title *“beast”* comes to represent one miraculously healed individual who previously was one of the group of 7. By the present time of v. 12, the full authority of the *“beast”* rests upon this risen individual. He is, therefore, both a man and the embodiment of the full extent of governing authority, which is why the man is called the *“beast.”*

2nd Element of Rev. 13:12 - Wound Is Described Exactly as in v. 3

The second element we should consider is the description of the beast's wound. The Apostle chose to describe that wound in v. 12 with the same four Greek words he used in the second sentence of v. 3. The use of these same four words, ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου - *“the wound of death,”* should cause us to recall their first use and context. The wound is one that kills, that results in being dead. No recovery from this *“fatal wound”* could have been hoped for nor expected.

3rd Element of Rev. 13:12 - Recovery Is Described Exactly as in v. 3

This makes the third element for us to consider all the more striking. The wound that resulted in death nevertheless ἐθεραπεύθη - *“was healed.”* [[34](#)] This Greek verb and its corresponding noun is the basis for our English word *“therapeutic”* or healing. While in earlier classical Greek the verb involved *“caring for, tending, or paying close attention to”* (tending the land, serving another, paying attention to an admirer), by the time the Bible was written the term generally was used to convey the recovery from illness or injury.

This Greek term is the same word used in 13:3, and is also intended to draw our thoughts back to that previous context. Its use in v. 12 and in v. 3 carries the same meaning. In v. 3 one of the 7 rulers is *“comparable to having been violently slain into death but his wound of*

death is healed.” All the power and intensity of Rev 13:3 should be recalled as we encounter these exact same five words used only nine verses later.

4th Element of Rev. 13:12 - The Healing is the Reason for Worship

The fourth element for us to consider from Rev 13:12 is that this miraculous healing from the wound of death is the basis for the forced worship of the healed Antichrist. The connection between the recovery from a deadly wound and the masses’ worship of the Antichrist was seen in Rev 13:3-4. In v. 12, there is also a direct connection between the deification and compulsory worship of the Antichrist, and the Antichrist’s conquering of the deadly wound. The forced worship of the Antichrist is because he is healed from the wound of death.

The Reader is Encouraged to Contemplate & Consider

As we read we should also begin pondering the questions: Could the spontaneous deification and worship of one of the 7 former rulers be the legitimate response of the masses if they knew that the healing was from a deadly condition that did not actually result in death? Could a miraculous healing of a dying but not dead ruler be sufficient cause for the initial spontaneous worship of the recovered ruler, and the sustainable basis for effectively enforcing this worship worldwide? While we should not yet come to firm conclusions on these questions, they should remain before us as we consider the third and final reference in Revelation 13.

Death or Dying in Revelation 13:14?

... saying to those who are dwelling upon the earth to make an image to the beast, who has the wound of the dagger and who lived.

Revelation 13:14b []*

In this final reference, the second beast instructs the inhabitants of the earth to construct an “*image*” of the Antichrist. Then he commands the world to worship it upon the penalty of death (Rev 13:15). The same four elements require attention.

1st Element of Rev. 13:14 - The Wound is to the “Beast”

As in Rev 13:12, the wounded one is called “*the beast*.” Unlike the first reference in v. 3 where John was very careful to identify the wounded party as only one of the 7 heads, here the wounded one is the beast himself. The governing power, which consisted of 7 rulers and their individual bureaucracies, has been reduced to a single ruler. After the governing power comes to rest exclusively upon the one brutally wounded but healed ruler, the title “*beast*” correctly applies only to him.

2nd Element of Rev. 13:14 - “The Wound of the Dagger”

The second element for our consideration must be the description of the beast’s wound in Rev 13:14. Here the wound is called τὴν πληγὴν τῆς μαχαίρης - “*the wound of the dagger*.” What was twice before described as ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου - “*the wound of death*,” is modified to “*the wound of the dagger*.” The juxtaposition of the two nouns, μαχαίρης for θανάτου - “*sword*” for “*death*” is apt.

The Definition of μάχαιρα - “dagger”

The noun μάχαιρα has been used since 400 B.C. to refer to a weapon in the form of a short sword or long dagger. [35] It is an instrument used for killing. The warning to the followers of the Lamb demonstrates the deadly qualities of this weapon.

If anyone will be killed by a μαχαίρη (“dagger”), by a μαχαίρη (“dagger”) it is required for him to be killed.

Revelation 13:10 [*]

The μάχαιρα - “*dagger*” was carried by those arresting Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and by at least one of his disciples (Matt 26:47,51,52; Mark 14:43, 47, 48; Luke 22:49, 52; John 18:10, 11). In Luke’s presentation of Christ’s end-time prophecies, Jesus’ words in Luke 21:24 echo the dual outcomes of captivity or death by μάχαιρα - “*a dagger*” previously seen in Rev 13:10. In recounting the triumphs of the faithful, the writer of Hebrews shows how some performed acts of righteousness and escaped the edge of μαχαίρης - “*a dagger*” (Heb

11:34). James, the brother of the Apostle John, was murdered by Herod μαχαίρη - *"by a dagger"* (Act 12:2). Paul joyfully encourages believers that nothing, including the martyrdom via μάχαιρα - *"a dagger"* can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus (Rom 8:35). The sharp piercing power of the two-edged μάχαιρα is surpassed by the working of the living Word of God in Heb 4:12.

The Use of μάχαιρα is Instructive

The Antichrist's wound of death is from τὴν πληγὴν τῆς μαχαίρης - *"the wound of the sword."* The Antichrist's wounds are not the result of an accident or mishap. He is intentionally targeted and attacked with a very deadly weapon. As we have just observed from the survey of its uses in the New Testament, μάχαιρα - *"dagger,"* was an extremely effective tool for killing. The picture of death, the fatal or mortal wound described in Rev 13:3 and in Rev 13:12, is filled in by the Apostle when he states that the wound is from μάχαιρα - *"a dagger"* which efficiently and effectively kills its victims.

3rd Element of Rev. 13:14 - After Being Wounded He "Lived"

In dramatic contrast to the deadly nature of the Antichrist's wound, and considering the weapon used to inflict it, the Antichrist nevertheless ἔζησεν - *"lived."* In the two previous references, *"the wound of death was healed"* (Rev 13:3 & 12). So also in this reference, τὴν πληγὴν τῆς μαχαίρης - *"the wound of the sword"* is conquered and the Antichrist ἔζησεν - *"lived."* That the Antichrist *"lived"* following the attack by μάχαιρα is the third element for us to consider from Rev 13:14.

4th Element of Rev. 13:14 - Compulsory Worship

The fourth element for our consideration is that the second beast commands construction of an image of the Antichrist, which he then forces everyone to worship (Rev 13:15). The reason why he demands the image to be made and worshiped is given in Rev 13:14, *"... who has the wound of the dagger and who lived."* The Antichrist is deified and his image worshiped because he lived after receiving the dagger

wound.

Summary of the Three Verses from Revelation 13

The three references to the fatality of the beast in Revelation 13 were each presented using strong language that emphasized the severity and type of the Antichrist's wound. In these three references, the Apostle saw that the one who was attacked looked comparable to having been violently slain into death by a fatal wound, the wound of the dagger. Despite the severity of this terrible wound, in each reference the one with this mortal injury conquers death. Twice the wound is said to be healed, and in the final reference the beast is simply said to be alive.

Through these three verses, we also see a progression in the evolving nature of the political governing structure of this ruling power. At the time the wound is inflicted, the ruling power of this government resides in 7 members that control 10 regions. After the deadly wound is "*healed*," its miraculous nature initiates amazement and wonder across the world and ignites spontaneous outbursts of worship for this one who conquers death.

This one individual becomes the sole ruler over the 10 regions. His authority extends over every tribe, people, language group and nation (Rev 13:7). The term "*beast*" describes this one ruler, even though it previously described the governing authority which had 7 rulers. The "*beast*" represents the empire's governing power. As the power moves from the 7 rulers to rest on only the one who conquered death, John appropriately refers to that sole ruler as "*the beast*."

Resolving Doubt About the Use of ὡς - "as if" in Revelation 13:3

As we have examined the three references in Revelation 13 concerning the death of the Antichrist, two of them may still cause some doubt. In Rev 13:3 the Apostle John saw one of the heads of the beast which looked "*as if*," or "*comparable to*" having been violently slain into death. The reader may still wonder if the Apostle's intended meaning was that the head only appeared to be slain, but in fact that appearance might have been false. The Greek word translated variously "*as if*" or "*like*," or "*comparable to*" is the word ὡς. Some

may have found the previous discussion about the use of ὥς unconvincing, or simply leaving too much room for doubt.

Comparing the Use of ὥς in Revelation 5:6 & 13:3

If there was another use of ὥς in a setting that very nearly parallels that found in Rev 13:3, where the meaning was not in doubt, perhaps much less uncertainty would continue to exist. Fortunately, there is a parallel use of ὥς in another part of the book of Revelation where the meaning is very clear. In fact, the Greek words are identical, as is the setting. So exact is this parallel usage that the Apostle John may have deliberately chosen his words in Rev 13:3 so they would duplicate this previous statement in Rev 5:6.

And I saw one out of the heads ὥς ἐσφαγμένην (“comparable to having been violently slain”) into death

Revelation 13:3 [*]

And I saw in the midst of the throne ... a Lamb standing ὥς ἐσφαγμένον (“comparable to having been violently slain”)

Revelation 5:6 [*]

In Rev 5:6 & 13:3, the same Greek word ὥς is used followed immediately by the same Greek verb σφάζω - “to violently slay,” in the very same perfect tense, in the very same form (as an adverbial participle). The only difference between the two forms of the verb σφάζω is that one is a feminine form to match the feminine Greek word for “head” (13:3), while the other is masculine to match the masculine Greek word for “lamb” (5:6).

In Rev 5:6 the Apostle has another vision where he sees a lamb standing in the midst of the throne, and in the midst of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders. In his vision, John saw this lamb standing ὥς ἐσφαγμένον - “comparable to having been violently slain.” The lamb is identified in the context of Rev 5:6 as “out of the tribe of Judah, the root of David” (5:5).

You are worthy ... because you were slain.

Revelation 5:9

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain ...

Revelation 5:12

The lamb is worshiped because it was slain, just as the one ruler from Rev 13:3 is worshiped after being slain. The Lamb is Jesus Christ who is worshiped for laying down his life in order to purchase men for God (Rev 5:9, cf 13:7).

When the Apostle John uses ὥς ἐσφαγμένον - "*comparable to having been violently slain*," he does not mean that the Lamb had only the appearance of being slain, but that this appearance was false. Jesus Christ, the Lamb standing comparable to having been violently slain did, in fact die, and did, in fact, conquer death. By doing so, the Lamb purchased men from their sins for God the Father, and for this, he is worshiped by all in heaven.

In the same way, the description of the Antichrist as ὥς ἐσφαγμένην - "*comparable to having been violently slain*" should not be understood as presenting a false image of having been slain. Since the two Greek words are identical except for gender, and their contexts are so very similar, and worship is the response to the events described, in part, by these two Greek words, then it would seem very appropriate to regard the ὥς ἐσφαγμένην of Rev 13:3 as carrying the same intended meaning as the ὥς ἐσφαγμένον of Rev 5:6.

The Apostle Describes the Picture of a Slain Ruler

There are two observations that we should take away from the examination of the two Greek words ὥς ἐσφαγμένην of Rev 13:3 in light of their use in Rev 5:6. The first observation is that the Apostle John did not intend the readers of Rev 13:3 to regard ὥς as meaning the one head had only the false appearance of slaughter but not its reality. The parallel use of ὥς, meaning "*like*," or "*as if*," or "*comparable to*," in these two references confirms that in John's description of both visions he was endeavoring to convey, within the constraints of language, the essential nature of what he had seen. John wanted his readers to understand that just as the Lamb stood looking as if it had been violently slain because Christ Jesus had in fact been violently slain, so also the one head or ruler of the 7 looked as if it had

been violently slain into death, because the Antichrist, will, in fact, be violently slain into death. The Apostle's use of ὥς - "as if," was not intended and, therefore, should not be regarded as meaning that the slaying of either of these two was only an image or false appearance.

The Apostle Contrasts the Slain Antichrist with the Slain Christ

The second thing we should observe from these two Greek words in Rev 13:3 and 5:6 is the contrast between the two subjects. Christ Jesus is contrasted with the Antichrist. Both appear to John in visions as having been violently slain, and both receive worship because they conquer death. One receives the repeated worship of everyone in heaven. The other receives the spontaneous worship of some and the strictly enforced worship of everyone on earth. The only reason the Lamb can stand after "*having been violently slain*" is because the Lamb is no longer dead.

The perfect tense of ἐσφαγμένον accurately captures the present force resulting from the past completed action of the slaying of the Lamb. The one head of the beast, the Antichrist, is also depicted by the same verbal ἐσφαγμένην also in the perfect tense. The violent slaying of the Antichrist will have continuing force in the present time of the vision because the Antichrist will be alive again also. Both live again after "*having been violently slain.*"

Resolving Doubt About ἔζησεν - "he lived" in Revelation 13:14

The second area that may still cause some doubt regarding the Apostle's meaning is in Rev 13:14.

... saying to those who are dwelling upon the earth to make an image to the beast, who has the wound of the dagger and who lived.

Revelation 13:14 [*]

The Tension of ζάω - "to live" with Aorist Tense

To some, the use of a verb that means "*living*" might indicate that the Antichrist never died. They might interpret Rev 13:14 as the Antichrist being wounded by a deadly weapon in a violent attack, but instead of

dying the Antichrist lives on. It may seem odd that a form of the Greek verb ζάω - “to live” would be used by the Apostle if he actually was intending to mean a resurrection from the dead.

The Types of Action in Greek Tenses

The Greek tenses have a different relationship with time than English tenses. When formed as regular verbs the Greek tense does convey the time of the verb’s action but in a secondary way. Greek tenses are primarily interested in the verb’s type of action or states of completion.

Greek scholars have recognized three basic types of action in the tenses of regularly formed verbs. [36] When the writer perceives the action of the verb as a complete whole, whether it occurs once or is extended over time, he will generally use the Greek aorist tense to express it. The time secondarily associated with the aorist tense is generally past, but not always. The other basic types of action involve repeated or continuing action, and action in various states of completion. Each of these types of actions have different tenses associated with them which more specifically define the verb’s action.

The Greek writer chooses a particular tense according to how he himself saw the event, or according to how he chooses to emphasize it for his readers. This does not involve distortion, but rather a legitimate selecting of certain aspects for more emphasis than others. At another time he may choose to emphasize other aspects of the event, or emphasize nothing beyond the fact that it happened. Since a Greek writer could choose to relate an incident to his readers in several ways, how he chooses to have his readers see the action of the verb will determine which tense he uses.

The aorist tense describes types of action that are seen as a complete whole or a completed event. If the Greek writer chooses to relate the verb’s action as a single unit as opposed to a process, then he is more likely to choose the Greek aorist tense. The actual length of time that the whole event encompasses does not matter.

As was seen, the Greek perfect tense reflects the writer’s choice to emphasize a continuing force resulting from the already completed

action of the verb. To illustrate this, we imagined a Greek writer telling of a sick man who has taken medicine but has not yet become well. This use of the perfect tense reflected the writer's desire to emphasize the elements of the incident to the reader. The same Greek writer at another time may choose to relay the incident differently, according to his purpose at that time. It is not a matter of the writer changing the incident, but of how he chooses to tell it. If the writer chooses to phrase the incident such as "the sick man took medicine" - this is a completed whole, and, not wanting to emphasize anything else, he may use the aorist tense.

Using the Aorist Tense of ζάω - "to live" Seems Contradictory

Knowing what type of action the Greek aorist tense represents, we can now turn our attention to its use in Rev 13:14. The Apostle John chose to pair ζάω - "to live" with the aorist tense. Since the verb is in the aorist, John probably desired the reader to understand the action as a complete event. Just what kind of complete event is the real question. Usually, the surrounding context indicates just how expansive the complete event may be.

In Acts 26:5 the Apostle Paul views his whole prior life as a Pharisee as a complete unit or as a whole and so uses ζάω in the aorist tense.

So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up ... that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.

Acts 26:4 & 5

When Paul was defending himself, he chose to provide a brief history of his life. A crucial part of Paul's past was his life as a Pharisee. Paul desires his audience to see that particular part of his life as a completed whole. The whole expanse of this prior life as a Pharisee was a completed event which he describes using ζάω - "to live" with the aorist tense. The context informs us that Paul's Pharisaic life encompassed a good deal of time. [[37](#)]

However, in Rev 13:14, the context restricts the complete event to the period of time that follows "*the wound of the dagger.*" The combination of the verb ζάω - "to live" in the aorist tense seems to be

a contradiction. Paul's use of ζάω - "to live" for a prior portion of his life does not present the same problem. Paul's life continued after he was a Pharisee but with a significant change in emphasis and focus. Paul viewed that previous part of his life as a completed whole from which he moves on. He used ζάω - "to live" to express what he did while alive in the past.

In Rev 13:14, however, the verb ζάω - "to live" in the aorist tense is used in a different setting. Here ζάω - "to live" is not used to communicate the way the beast conducted its life. Rather the issue is literally about life as opposed to death. Further, the status of the beast being alive after receiving the fatal dagger wound is portrayed by John as a completed whole. How is this possible? How can being alive after an attack with a deadly weapon be viewed as a completed whole?

We generally view living as ongoing, not completed. This is especially true if the root meaning of the verb - "to live" is being emphasized. Being alive is usually thought of as continuous. Yet the verb ζάω - "to live" is paired with the aorist tense that conveys the whole of the activity. The nature of living would seem to most naturally imply a passage of time signaling the use of a different tense than the aorist. Yet the reader of Rev 13:14 must contend with an actual life or death scenario communicated by a verb that means "living" paired with a Greek tense that conveys a complete event type of action.

Resolution of Tension - The Aorist with ζάω Means Resurrection

This confusing contradiction of ζάω in the aorist tense finds resolution if the verb "to live" means entering back into a living state from the state of death. Resurrection is an event that occurs in a single moment. Resurrection is not a process but an instantaneous transformation from death to life all in a single moment of time. As such, coming back to life in an instant can readily be seen as a completed whole event.

The Apostle John was not intending to emphasize the ongoing duration of life in the wounded Antichrist. Rather he was drawing attention to the transformation from death to life. This is an instantaneous event. One that is completed as soon as it happens. The complete event type

of action of the Greek aorist tense is on full display in resurrection scenarios.

A room is dark at night until an electric light is turned on. Then, instantaneously the room that was dark is awash in light. In the same way, becoming alive after an individual was dead is a singular event best conveyed by the complete whole type of action found with the Greek aorist tense. In resurrection scenarios, the verb ζάω - “to live” in the aorist tense represents that transforming supernatural event. Being alive is not remarkable, but becoming alive after being dead is an instantaneous supernatural event.

The Greek verb ζάω and a near synonym ἀναζάω - “to live again” are used 142 times in the New Testament (ζάω = 140 uses, ἀναζάω = 2 uses). However, only 9 times are these verbs paired with the aorist tense as regular verbs (i.e. indicative mood). One use was already seen in Acts 26:5, but there Paul used ζάω with the aorist to describe what he did while living. Paul was not using ζάω to emphasize living as opposed to death. Aside from Acts 26:5, all remaining 8 uses are found in resurrection scenarios. Moreover, in each of these 8 uses the transformation from death to life is the direct emphasis of the immediate context. To summarize, in 8 of 9 uses in the New Testament ζάω and ἀναζάω in the aorist indicative emphasize the transformation from death to life.

Resurrection in Luke 15:24 - ἀναζάω

In Luke 15, Jesus is telling the parable of the Prodigal Son. In Luke 15:22-24, the father is rejoicing at the return of his lost and wayward son.

But the father said to his slaves, “Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet; and bring the fatted calf, kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.”

Luke 15:22-24 [*]

From the father’s perspective, the return of his wayward son seemed

as if the son had been resurrected. To the father, his son “*was dead and ἀνέζησεν*” - “*he lived again.*”

Resurrection in Luke 15:32 - ζάω

After the older son discovered what seemed to him the undeserved wealth of good feelings others were expressing over his reckless younger brother, he complained bitterly to his father. But the father refused to see his own rejoicing as inappropriate.

And he said to him, “My child, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to be merry and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and began to live, and was lost and has been found.”

Luke 15:31-32

For a second time the father compared the return and repentance of his wayward son to his son seeming to be dead but ἐζησεν - “*lived.*”

Resurrection in Romans 7:9 - ἀναζάω

In Rom 7:9, the Apostle Paul explains the relationship between the Law given through Moses and the operation of sin. In vs. 7-8 Paul emphasizes that the Law is not sin, but rather serves to expose sin. When sinfulness is made known, that knowledge tempts and entices to further sin.

But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. And I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died.

Romans 7:8-9

Paul uses the image of death and life to powerfully explain the interaction of sin and the Law at work in himself. Before knowing what God considered wrong, sin existed in Paul's life but remained unknown. To Paul, he was alive and sin was dead. However, when he became aware of God's requirements, sin was no longer unknown. The knowledge of sin through the Law resulted in sin's new life and Paul's death. Sin had new life not only because Paul became aware of it, but

also because the knowledge of sin tempted him to further offenses. Paul, who considered sin to be dead, recognized that sin was actually alive with new power in his life. As he also thought himself alive and free apart from the Law, Paul now realized that he offended a holy God and was powerless and spiritually dead. Sin's new and more powerful life through the knowledge of the Law is described with the Greek "ἀνέζησεν" - "it lived again"

Resurrection in Romans 14:9 - ζάω

In Romans 14, the Apostle Paul discusses the use of the believer's liberty with its restriction and the general admonition against judging one's fellow believer. Within this discussion is the following passage emphasizing the unity of believers even to death and beyond.

For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die we die for the Lord. Therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived, so that of both the dead and the living He might be Lord.

Romans 14:7-9 [*]

Paul reminds his readers that the appropriate response since Christ died and ἔζησεν - "lived" was not for believers to bicker and judge each other, but to recognize that we are each united to Christ and accountable to him. Paul's statement about Christ's resurrection uses the same Greek ἔζησεν also used in Rev 13:14.

Resurrection in Revelation 20:4 - ζάω

In Rev 20:4, John describes another vision concerning events and individuals after Satan is cast into the abyss for 1,000 years.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the Word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:4 [*]

In his vision, John witnesses the resurrection of the faithful who were martyred during the reign of the Antichrist because they refused to worship him. Those who were killed for not worshiping the Antichrist, nevertheless ἔζησαν - “*they lived*.” Again, the aorist indicative tense and mode are combined with the Greek verb ζάω “*to live*” to describe a resurrection scenario.

Resurrection in Revelation 20:5 - ζάω

In the following verse (v. 5) the rest of the dead are not to be resurrected until the end of the thousand-year period.

The remainder of the dead did not live until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

Revelation 20:5 [*]

Those who did not ἔζησαν - “*they lived not*” at the beginning of the thousand years, will not be resurrected until the thousand years are completed. Clearly, resurrection is the topic since Rev 20:5-6 specifically addresses it. The resurrection that the faithful will experience and the resurrection which the unrighteous will not experience at the beginning of the thousand years are both described using the Greek verb ζάω - “*to live*” in the aorist indicative tense and mood. This is the same tense and mode used in Rev 13:14 when describing the Antichrist.

Resurrection in Revelation 2:8 - ζάω

Seven uses of the verbs ζάω and ἀναζάω in the Greek aorist tense have been reviewed - Rev 13:14; Luke 15:24, 32; Rom 7:9; 14:9; Rev 20:4, 5. There is one final New Testament resurrection scenario in which the verb ζάω is used in the aorist tense. In the opening lines of Christ’s message to the church at Smyrna, we find these words:

*And these things say the first and the last,
who became dead and who lived.*

Revelation 2:8b [*]

The two phrases of Rev 13:14 and Rev 2:8, which contain the verb

ἔζησεν - “*he lived*,” display parallel qualities. Both phrases begin with the relative pronoun ὃς - “*who*”. The first verbal clause of both phrases describes the death. Both phrases contain two verbs of which ἔζησεν is the last word and the second verb. The form of the verb in these two phrases is identical: the same verb, tense, voice, mode, and singular person.

Rev 2:8 ὃς ἐγενετο νεκρὸς καὶ ἔζησεν
 who became dead and lived

Rev 13:14 ὃς ἔχει τὴν πληγὴν τῆς μαχαίρης καὶ ἔζησεν
 who has the wound of the dagger and lived

In Rev 2:8b Christ is identifying himself to his followers in the Smyrna Church. His identification also conveys his authority to instruct and discipline his churches. In Christ’s description he says of himself, “*Who became dead and who ἔζησεν*” - “*lived*,” he clearly did not mean to emphasize that he was living before he died. His emphasis is that after he “*became dead*,” he then “*lived*.” Christ’s authority to instruct the church at Smyrna is on the basis of being the resurrected head of the church. In the same way in Rev 13:14, the Apostle John’s emphasis is not that the Antichrist lived before he received “*the wound of the dagger*,” nor is he emphasizing that the Antichrist did not die although he received the dagger wound.

Just as its use in Rev 2:8b by Christ indicated an instantaneous living, a new living status following his death, so also ἔζησεν - “*he lived*” is intended by the Apostle John to convey an instantaneous living, a new living status after the Antichrist died from his wound. The interpretation of Christ’s words in Rev 2:8b clearly uses the aorist tense of the verb ζάω - “*to live*” to refer to his resurrection from the condition of death. The nature of the phrase in the same context of Rev 13:14b also demonstrates that the aorist tense of ζάω - “*to live*” following the description of “*the wound of the dagger*” must refer to the new life of the Antichrist, following his death, from the wound of death, in which he appeared comparable to having been violently slain

into death (v. 3). The Antichrist who received this mortal wound, this fatal wound of the dagger, lives after dying.

The 8 Uses of the Aorist ζάω and ἀναζάω are Resurrections

The fact that ζάω - “to live” and ἀναζάω - “to live again” are used in the New Testament 9 out of the 142 times in the aorist indicative tense and mode is illuminating. This relatively infrequent combination involving verbs meaning “to live” and “to live again” confirms the complete whole or event type of action of the aorist tense. When we consider that 8 of those 9 aorist uses unmistakably emphasize resurrection scenarios, the seemingly unusual combination of verbs which mean “to live” placed in a Greek tense that can convey a complete event type of action, all becomes clear. The context reveals that resurrection is the idea.

The Apostle John uses the aorist of ζάω - “to live,” once of the resurrection of the faithful martyrs in Rev 20:4, and once of the unrighteous dead who will not be resurrected for 1,000 years in Rev 20:5. The gospel writer Luke uses the aorist of ἀναζάω in Luke 15:24 and ζάω in v. 32 to describe the figurative resurrection of the Prodigal Son when he returned home to his father in repentance.

The Apostle Paul uses the aorist of ἀναζάω in Rom 7:9 to describe sin’s renewed life through the knowledge of the Law, and ζάω in Rom 14:9 to describe Christ’s resurrection from the dead. The Apostle John also uses the aorist of ζάω in Rev 2:8b as he quoted Christ’s words to the church at Smyrna, where Christ refers to his own resurrection. Finally, the Apostle John uses the aorist of ζάω to describe the Antichrist’s instantaneous transformation from death back to life in Rev 13:14b.

Luke, the Apostle Paul, the Apostle John, and Christ himself as quoted by John, all use the aorist tense with ζάω - “to live” and ἀναζάω - “to live again” to indicate and emphasize a resurrection from death to life. In addition, these 8 usages appear in narrative, epistolary, and apocalyptic New Testament genres. The use of ζάω and ἀναζάω in the aorist tense to convey resurrection scenarios is, therefore, not an

isolated usage. They are used by multiple individuals in three New Testament genres.

Doubt about the Antichrist's Death and Resurrection

It is interesting that the first words and last words in Revelation chapter 13 that deal with the issues surrounding the death and resurrection of the Antichrist both succinctly summarize the teaching on his death and life experiences. These first and last words are also clarified in their intended meaning for the reader through parallel usages of the Greek words with comparisons to Christ's death and new life. We need not suffer from doubt or uncertainty regarding the Apostle John's intended message concerning the Antichrist's death and his new life.

The first words that begin to speak to this issue in Rev 13:3, ὥς ἐσφαγμένην - *"comparable to having been violently slain,"* are also used of Christ in Rev 5:6. The words ὥς ἐσφαγμένον in Rev 5:6 describe the actual violent physical death of Christ and its continuing force. So, we also can understand the Apostle John's use of ὥς ἐσφαγμένην - *"as comparable to having been violently slain"* in Rev 13:3 as the physical violent death of the Antichrist and its continuing effect in the future present time of John's vision.

The word ἔζησεν - *"he lived"* from Rev 13:14, represents John's clear message of the instant change from death to new life. This usage is paralleled in Rev 2:8b in which the words of Christ to his church in Smyrna also clearly convey the meaning of ἔζησεν - *"he lived"* as referring unquestionably to Christ's conquering of death through his resurrection back to the state of life.

Thus, the intended message of the Greek words that begin and end the discussion from Chapter 13 of Revelation about the Antichrist's physical state of death and the supernatural transformation back to a state of life is confirmed by the parallel usage seen in Christ's experience of these very same death and life issues. When combined, these first and last words of the Apostle John are verifiable as to their intended meaning, and say that the beast looked:

ὡς ἐσφαγμένην

comparable to having been violently slain . . .

Rev 13:3

. . .

καὶ ἔζησεν

and he lived

Rev 13:14

These first and last Greek words are paralleled with Christ's experience and thus clarify and capture the entire essence of the death and resurrection of the Antichrist.

Conclusions from the Consideration of Revelation 13

Throughout this examination, the reader has been asked to consider the growing volume and weight of the material without yet coming to any firm conclusions. There are further indications and supporting biblical witnesses to the intended message of the Antichrist's actual death and life through resurrection. We are not done with this topic. We have only examined the evidence of Revelation 13. There is still the message of Revelation 17, which we will consider in later chapters.

Some may object to the idea of the Antichrist's resurrection based upon philosophical, pre-suppositional, or presumed theological grounds. However, these objections must adequately explain away all that we have encountered thus far. However one may personally feel about the antagonist to God being supernaturally resurrected from the dead to the worship of the masses on earth, the force of the text and context seems to strongly support this very conclusion. To hold to an opposite position regarding the resurrection of the Antichrist, one must demonstrate that the indications which seem to confirm a resurrection in fact do not, and to satisfactorily explain what these seemingly supportive indications do mean if not a physical resurrection. [[38](#)]

CHAPTER SIX

WHEN DOES THE ANTICHRIST DIE AND LIVE AGAIN?

Both Revelation 13 and 17 provide insight into the timing of the Antichrist's death and return to life. In Rev 13:3 the Apostle John sees one of the 7 heads "*as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.*" With this statement, the Apostle establishes a chronological marker (the "*terminus a quo*") for the timing of the fatal injury.

Revelation 13: The Earliest Time of the Death and Resurrection

Since the mortal wound occurs to one of the 7 heads, it follows that the wounding must be at a time when there are only 7 heads or 7 decision-makers in the Roman confederation. This indicates that the deadly attack upon the Antichrist occurs after he subdues 3 of the 10 original confederation regions. The fatal attack upon the Antichrist cannot occur earlier than his successful removal of all 3 regional rulers. Also, the attack cannot come until the Antichrist is elevated as ruler over one of the original 10 regions. There must be only 7 decision-making rulers, and the Antichrist, being the wounded head, must also then be one himself.

Revelation 13: The Latest Time of the Death and Resurrection

Rev 13:5 provides the other chronological marker (the "*terminus ad quem*") for the fatal attack upon the Antichrist. In v. 5 the Apostle John states that "*authority to act for forty two months was given to him.*" We previously saw that this 42 month period correlates with the last 3 ½ years of the final 70th week of years from Dan 9:24-27. The final 7-year period contains roughly 84 months divided in half. The second half contains 42 months. The Antichrist's full authority is during the final 42 months. This means that he does not come into this full authority until the midpoint of the final 7 years.

Since the Antichrist's full authority is uninterrupted and lasts for the

full 2nd half of the final 7 years, we know that he must be alive again by this time. Therefore, the Apostle's statement in Rev 13:5 provides us with the chronological marker for the resurrection of the Antichrist. He must have been resurrected before the midpoint of this final 7-year period. The latest that the fatal attack and coming to life can occur to the Antichrist is the midpoint of that firm covenant in Dan 9:27.

In considering the passage of Rev 13:1-10, we are able to identify the earliest and the latest time for the fatal attack and the Antichrist's return to life. The fatal attack cannot occur before the Antichrist "*subdues*" 3 of the 10 original regions. The supernatural resurrection could occur no later than 3 ½ years from the establishment of the firm covenant of Dan 9:27.

Narrower Window for Death and Resurrection in Revelation 13

It is possible that the text of Rev 13:3-5 may even narrow these parameters further:

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

Revelation 13:3-5

We can see a definite progression of events in these three verses. The Antichrist, being the head or ruler that is fatally wounded and who unexpectedly comes back to life, is greeted initially with amazement. This amazement then turns into worship. Next, the "*whole earth*" warms to the idea of the Antichrist's return to power. In stating "*Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?*" the masses are embracing the idea of submitting to the rule and protection of the Antichrist who cannot be killed. Who better to rule and protect the people than the one who conquers death? The Antichrist himself accepts and promotes this worship, and necessarily blasphemes God

by doing so. The Antichrist also accepts the people's desire for him to rule them by exercising authority for 42 months.

Progression of Events in Revelation 13 Does Not Require Much Time

How much time elapses between the fatal wounding in v. 3 and the exercise of authority for 42 months in v. 5? It does not seem that the intervening steps, from amazement to worship to seeking his rule and protection, would require an extended period of time. The progression of events in the text of Rev 13:3-5 could occur rapidly, requiring only a rather short period of time.

Examining Revelation 17 for the Timing of Death and Resurrection

Up until now, we have only looked at Revelation 13 for clues to the timing of the Antichrist's death and resurrection. We have yet to look to Revelation 17 for what it may contribute to our growing timeline of events. The rest of this chapter is a look into Revelation 17, because it contains important clues that both narrow down the timing of these events and show how intertwined the most important ones are in their eventual fulfillment.

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

Revelation 17:7-11

Of the seven verses in Rev 17:7-13, three are directly relevant to the current discussion. These three verses, however, must be seen in their proper context to fully appreciate their impact and contribution. In

Rev 17:7, the angel who first addressed the Apostle in v. 1 speaks to John again. The angel informs John that he will tell him the mystery of the woman who is called "*the mother of harlots*," and of the beast that carries her. The angel is going to explain three things, the meaning of the harlot, the meaning of the beast with 7 heads and 10 horns, and the interrelationship of the harlot and the beast.

Revelation 17:8

Of the three areas the angel will explain, he chooses to discuss the beast first. Rev 17:8 is a remarkable verse in its literary construction. Verse 8 not only introduces the beast in general, albeit without any discussion of the heads and horns, it is also designed to connect to several passages previously seen in Revelation. Rev 17:8 is an intricate and elegantly prepared literary unit composed of three parts.

Revelation 17:9a

The angel discusses the meaning of the 7 heads beginning in v. 9. This verse begins with the same type of introduction that is found earlier in Revelation. In Rev 13:8, just before revealing the number of this beast, the Apostle John says, "*here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast.*" In Revelation 17, what the angel is disclosing also requires wisdom of its readers: "*Here is the mind which has wisdom.*" Clearly, he considers this part of his message to be very important. Therefore, we need to pay very close attention to what he says and how he says it.

Revelation 17:9b-10

After stating that the reader will need wisdom, vs. 9b -10a say that the 7 heads of the beast have dual meanings. While some may consider this contrary to accepted interpretive principles, the indication of vs. 9b-10a is clear. The 7 heads of the beast represent two different things.

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings.

Revelation 17:9b-10a

Some have tried to resolve this interpretive tension by pointing out

that in antiquity mountains sometimes represented power or ruling authority. They would contend that the angel did not really mean to indicate dual applications for the 7 heads. Rather, the reference to the 7 mountains is another way of referring to the 7 rulers mentioned in Rev 17:10a. However, this attempted solution to a perceived difficulty raises further questions. Why would the angel say, in the same sentence, that the 7 heads “*are*” two different things, if his intention was to emphasize only one in the interpretation? We will come back to this issue later.

The simplest interpretation of Rev 17:9b-10a is to regard the words of the angel as meaning just what the words communicate. According to the regular use of the rules of communication, the angel is indicating that the 7 heads are both 7 hills *and* 7 kings.

Revelation 17:10

Rev 17:10 follows up on one of the two applications in v. 9. In v. 10 the angel discloses that the 7 kings serve in a progression. Verse 10 itself was also composed by the angel in the same elegantly prepared literary pattern found in vs. 8 & 11.

Revelation 17:11

Verse 11 is also concerned with the progression and identification of the rulers from v. 10. As will be seen in the next section, the use of the intricate pattern seems to indicate a connection between the Antichrist’s death and resurrection and when they will occur.

The Remaining Context of Revelation 17

Having discussed the meaning of the 7 heads of the beast in Rev 17:9-11 and how they progress over time, in Rev 17:12-13 the angel reveals that the beast’s 10 horns also have changed during this same period. This lays the foundation for explaining the change in attitudes among those exercising the authority of the beast. These changes are followed by action as the beast and his 10 administrators destroy the harlot that the beast once supported. The angel also explains the symbolism of the waters that support the harlot and that the harlot herself is a city “*which is having a kingdom over the kings of the*

earth."

The Initial Detailed Consideration of Revelation 17

The previous brief review of Rev 17:7-13 was to remind us of the ideas in these verses. Now we will discover the artistry and ingenuity of the angelic messenger, whose words form elegant literary structures that communicate extremely important prophetic information. To mine all that these verses can tell us, we will look at them two more times. That may sound like overdoing it. But what we will find in the angel's words is nothing less than the political roadmap for the rise of the Antichrist. Claims such as these require that we have very solid reasons for making them. Given that there is much to understand and the importance of what we will find, we will make two passes over these verses, using what we find on the first pass to delve deeper during the second.

Structure and Composition of Revelation 17:8

The angel who will tell the Apostle John the mystery of the woman and of the beast begins that description in v. 8. As has been stated before, this verse can be divided into three parts. Parts A and C are in the form of that elegant literary pattern. Part B is sandwiched between and provides information that reminds the reader of similar descriptions from the larger passage of Revelation 13. These points of common description were discussed previously in Chapter Three.

Existence Indicator			
Time Reference Indicator			
<u>Revelation 17:8a</u> (author's translation)			
Intro			<i>"The beast which you saw"</i>
Line 1	E	Past	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near	<i>"and is about to ascend up from the abyss"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

Revelation 17:8b (author's translation)

"And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,"

Revelation 17:8c (author's translation)

Intro

"as they see the beast that"

Line 1 E Past

"was"

Line 2 A Present

"and is not,"

Line 3 E Future

"and will come"

Time Reference & Existence Indicators in Revelation 17:8

The literary patterns of parts A and C in v. 8 both begin with phrases that introduce the subject described in the lines that follow. In parts A and C, that subject is the beast whom the Apostle just saw carrying a woman. In these elegant patterns, each line contains a verb describing the actions or conditions of the subject. The first line after the introduction speaks about the beast in past time. The second line describes the beast in present time. The third and fourth lines speak about the beast in future time, with the third line speaking of a nearer future than the fourth line. In Rev 17:8c, there is no fourth line. The third line simply speaks about the beast in a generic future way. The use of the past, present, and future in these lines was referred to earlier as the time reference indicator. These time reference indicators are keyed, not to the tenses of the verbs in these lines, but to the implied time of their completion or fulfillment. For example, v. 8a line 3 says:

and he is about to ascend up from the abyss.

The tenses of the verbs are not future, but the clear implication of the phrase is a future fulfillment. The Greek verb μέλλει - "is about" introduces the idea of imminent but not yet completed action. In addition to the time reference indicators, these lines also contain existence indicators. Each of the lines following the introduction also indicates the beast's absence or existence in the four time periods.

Summary of Revelation 17:8

When all three parts of Rev 17:8 are seen together, we can more clearly observe that it is concerned with the death and coming to life again of the Antichrist. This message is so important to the angel that he repeats the pattern twice.

We should also take note that the first subject the angel discusses, as he seeks to explain the mystery of the woman and the beast, is the beast. The first aspect of the beast which the angel speaks about is the beast's death and coming back to life. The angel presents this information using two nearly identical literary patterns that surround a narrative which directs our thoughts to other passages in which this same topic is presented.

Structure and Composition of Revelation 17:10 - 11

We discovered the same five line pattern in v. 10, and with some slight modification in v. 11 also. After having employed his literary pattern twice in v. 8, the angel suspends its use in v. 9 to warn and encourage the reader that wisdom is required to fathom his message. He begins his message by clearly indicating that the 7 heads of the beast represent two different things. The angel then reverts back to his literary craftsmanship again in vs. 10 & 11.

Existence Indicator			Time Reference Indicator	
				<u>Revelation 17:9</u>
				<i>"Here is the mind which has wisdom.</i>
				<i>The seven heads are seven mountains</i>
				<i>on which the woman sits,"</i>
				<u>Revelation 17:10</u>
Intro				<i>"and they are seven kings,"</i>
Line 1	A	Past		<i>"five have fallen"</i>
Line 2	E	Present		<i>"one is,"</i>
Line 3	A	Future Near		<i>"the other has not yet come,"</i>
Line 4	E	Future Distant		<i>"and when he comes,</i> <i>he must remain a little."</i>

			<u>Revelation 17:11</u>
Intro			<i>"And the beast which "</i>
Line 1	E	Past	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near	<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant	<i>"and he goes to destruction ."</i>

Both vs. 10 & 11 each contain the same artfully prepared literary pattern seen in vs. 8a & 8c. Verses 10 & 11 both begin with a phrase introducing a subject which is discussed in the following lines. These introductory phrases are followed by four lines which further describe the subjects just introduced. Verse 11 has a compound phrase as its third line. This difference within the pattern draws our attention to this third line. The difference in the established pattern serves to highlight further important information.

Time Reference & Existence Indicators in Revelation 17:10 11

Each of the four lines following the introductory phrase in vs. 10 & 11 contains the same two indicators as v. 8. The patterns in vs. 10 & 11 use both the time reference indicators of past, present, near and distant future, and the existence indicators where the subject is either absent or not absent in those different times. This allows the angel to communicate and highlight certain aspects of his message. These important aspects are communicated both by the repetitions which create the pattern and by the differences that draw our attention.

Highlighting the 6th Ruler in Revelation 17:10

The angel in Rev 17:10 uses three complementary indicators to communicate that the 6th ruler is the Antichrist, that ultimate human antagonist to God and his followers. The first concerns the choice of words used to identify the rulers in v. 10. Three different designations are used by the angel to refer to the 7 rulers.

The five

The one

The other

Two of these three invite indifference. Neither “*the five*” nor “*the other*” single out a ruler for further consideration. Only “*the one*” draws our attention. Thus, the choice of words used to identify the 7 rulers is the first indication used by the angel to highlight the 6th ruler for further description.

The second complementary indicator is the time reference indicator. The angel uses the present tense in connection with the 6th ruler. The first 5 rulers are portrayed in past time. They have passed from consideration. The 7th ruler is portrayed in the near and distant future. The 7th ruler has not yet come into the time horizon of the reader and can, therefore, also be dismissed from further consideration. Only the 6th ruler is portrayed in the present. By only placing the 6th ruler in the ‘now’ or the present time of this verse, the angel is using the second of the three complementary indicators to identify the final ruler.

The third complementary indicator is the existence indicator. In each of the lines following the introduction, the angel uses language that indicates whether that subject is absent (A) or existing (E). After observing how the angel uses this indicator in the three literary patterns in vs. 8 & 11, we see that this existence indicator is used in an opposite fashion in the pattern of v. 10.

In all four patterns the existence indicator alternates between positive and negative, that is between existence and absence in all the lines that follow the introductory line. In the three patterns of vs. 8 & 11, the alternating begins in the positive position with the subject existing. However, in the literary pattern of v. 10, the existence indicator begins alternating from the negative position, with the subject being absent. This difference draws our attention.

As we see how the existence indicator is used differently in the literary pattern of v. 10, we are able to observe, among other things, that only the 6th ruler in the progression of 7 is portrayed as being present or existing. All of the other 6 rulers are portrayed as absent or non-existing. When taken together, these three complementary indicators mark out the 6th in the progression of rulers for further description and more specific identification in the following verse, Rev 17:11.

Similarities and Differences Between Revelation 17:8 & 11

After clearly highlighting the 6th ruler in v. 10, the angel moves on to provide a more comprehensive description of this ruler through the use of another artfully prepared, now familiar literary pattern in v. 11. This pattern in v. 11 is nearly identical to the two patterns presented in v. 8, with one notable modification.

When the literary pattern of v. 11 is compared to vs. 8a & 8c in the original Greek, striking similarities can be observed. A Greek reader would observe that three of the five lines of vs. 8a & 11 are exactly word for word identical. [39] In v. 8c, two of the four lines are identical in the Greek with their counterparts in v. 11. In addition, the subject in the introductory lines in vs. 8a, 8c, & 11 are nearly identical. The only truly significant difference among all three literary patterns occurs in the same line in all three verses. The third line after the introductory phrase is different in all three patterns.

Given the nearly identical character of the other lines in the patterns with their counterparts in these verses, the differences, always in the third line, draw our attention. This highlights the information contained there. The meaning and significance of the differences in these third lines of vs. 8a, 8c & 11 will be taken up shortly.

The Significance of the Similarities in Revelation 17:8 & 11

Clearly, the angel is making a major effort to connect the meaning of v. 8 with v. 11. As we discussed previously, Rev 17:8 is concerned with the Antichrist's death and return to life. This is so important that the angel repeats it twice through the two patterns of vs. 8a and 8c. Rev 17:8b draws our thoughts back to the fuller presentation of the beast's death and new life in Revelation 13. When we then encounter Rev 17:11, with its verbatim and other similar features from 17:8, we are able to recall the previous wealth of information concerning the death and resurrection of the Antichrist.

Revelation 17:11 - Lines 1 & 2

The portions of Rev 17:11 that portray the death of the Antichrist are the first and second lines after the introduction. These two lines are

repeated verbatim from the Greek of both vs. 8a & 8c. In all three literary patterns, these two lines say that the beast:

ἦν	"was"
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν	"and is not"

The literary pattern of Rev 17:10 tells us who dies in v. 11. In v. 11 we are reading about the 6th ruler who was highlighted for us in v. 10.

Revelation 17:11 - Line 3

The angel presents additional information in line 3. This third line differs from the nearly identical templates in vs. 8a & 8c. This single line of difference among the identical nature of the other four lines draws attention to itself, highlighting what the angel is presenting.

Revelation 17:11 - Line 3: Structure

Further evidence of the angel's literary art is found in the original Greek in this third line, which is composed of two phrases. The first phrase in line 3 describes the beast as the 8th ruler, and it contains eight syllables in the Greek. The second phrase tells us that this 8th ruler is also one of the previous 7 rulers, and it contains seven Greek syllables. The Greek numerals are just before the last word in both phrases. [[40](#)]

Existence Indicator			
		Time Reference Indicator	
		<u>Revelation 17:11</u>	
Intro		καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὃ	
Line 1	E	Past	ἦν
Line 2	A	Present	καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν
Line 3	E	Future Near	καὶ αὐτὸς ὀγδοὺς ἔστιν
			καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἔστιν,
Line 4	A	Future Distant	καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει.

Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)			
Intro			<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	E	Past	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	A	Present	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	E	Future Near	<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	A	Future Distant	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

The angel's literary artistry is on full display in Revelation 17:11. We will see more reasons as we move forward.

Revelation 17:11 - Line 3: The Beast Who Dies and Comes to Life

The beast, who is described as existing in the past tense but absent in the present, is described in the two phrases of the third line:

he himself also is an eighth and he is out of (or "from") the seven,

If the literary pattern of Rev 17:11 was read separately from the preceding verse, these compound phrases would seem meaningless. However, when v. 11 is considered in context, following the disclosures of v. 10, then the two phrases leap to life. The 6th ruler, who was clearly selected in v. 10 for further description, has already been correctly identified as the Antichrist who would die.

Now, through these compound phrases, we also recognize that the beast who will serve as the 6th of 7 rulers will be a ruler again following the rule of the 7th. Since the beast is described as an 8th ruler, we can correctly conclude that the Antichrist will be a ruler once again after the 7th ruler. Since the beast is also identified as belonging to the 7, we can correctly confirm that Rev 17:11 is describing one of the previous 7 rulers, more specifically the one clearly highlighted as the 6th ruler in the previous verse.

The Antichrist Dies & Rises Before He Becomes the 8th Ruler

The way the angel expresses his message in this third line is consistent with the two literary patterns of vs. 8a & 8c. Both of the counterparts to this third line refer to the Antichrist's return to life. In the third line of v. 8a, the angel says that the beast "is about to come up out of the abyss," predicting the beast's return to life. In the third

line of v. 8c, the angel simply says “and he will appear,” meaning the angel is again predicting that the beast who would die will return again.

In the compound phrases in the third line of v. 11, the angel is again predicting the Antichrist’s return to life. By describing the beast as dying in the two previous lines, and describing his return to rule as the 8th in the third line, the angel is predicting both the beast’s resurrection and what happens to him afterward.

The 6th ruler, who was highlighted by means of three complementary indicators in the literary pattern of v. 10, is identified in the literary pattern of the following verse as the beast who dies and returns to life to again serve as a ruler. In this way, the third lines of vs. 8a & 8c are also fulfilled. The 6th ruler is the Antichrist who dies, who will come again (v. 8c) by rising up out of the abode of the dead (v. 8a) to rule again as the 8th ruler after having himself ruled as one of the 7 (v. 11).

The Timing of the Antichrist’s Death & His Return to Power

We previously looked at the timing of the Antichrist’s death and resurrection. While we cannot say exactly when they will occur among the events of Revelation 13, we did see that there was a rather short time period during which his death and resurrection will come about. We saw that the earliest and the latest potential times were separated by a surprisingly short amount of time. We see the same thing in Rev 17:7-11. The close connection between Rev 17:10 & 11 allows us to observe just how short the time period may be between the Antichrist’s death and return to life.

The Earliest Possible Time for the Death of the Antichrist

Since the angel so skillfully highlighted the 6th of the 7 rulers as the beast in Rev 17:10-11, we can be quite certain that the violent death of the Antichrist could not occur before he serves his term as the supreme executive for the Roman confederation. It would seem contrary to the emphasis and guidance provided by the angel to see the Antichrist’s death occurring prior to his reign of the 6th ruler since the first three lines of v. 11 identify the 6th ruler as the beast himself and describe his death. The angel highlighted the 6th ruler in v. 10, so

he could identify him in v. 11 as the one that dies. The force of the finely fitted literary pattern leads to the conclusion that the violent death of the Antichrist will not occur until he reigns as the 6th ruler serving his term in the rotation of rulers.

The Latest Possible Time for the Death of the Antichrist

We have determined the earliest time the Antichrist could die according to the indications in Revelation 13 and 17. It remains then, for us to examine the two verses of 17:10 & 11 to determine the latest possible time for the Antichrist's death. Line 3a of v. 11 indicates that the beast himself is also an 8th ruler. We know from Revelation 13 that the Antichrist is given 42 months of continuous authority in his attempt to elevate himself above every notion of God. So, once the Antichrist takes all power to himself as the 8th and final ruler, he must have already experienced the death and resurrection that Revelation 13 and 17 both reveal.

Thus, we see that Rev 17:10 & 11 provide sufficient information for us to know that the violent death of the Antichrist must occur sometime after he begins to reign as the 6th ruler but no later than the beginning of his reign as 8th ruler, in that he must be alive again to reign as the 8th ruler himself.

Secondary Detailed Consideration of Revelation 17:8-11

We made a quick review of the relevant passages that speak to the timing of the Antichrist's death and resurrection. That was followed by our first detailed pass. We did this to gather additional information that we will need as we attempt to fully grasp all that is communicated in these elegantly structured literary patterns.

Next, we will see how the elegant structure of these verses also contributes meaning to the angel's message.

Why do these 4 uniquely prepared literary templates appear here? They are not here simply to display the ingenuity of the angelic messenger. Part of what we will find is that the way the angel uses time in these literary patterns has implications for the timing of the events he describes. We came to call them Time Reference indicators.

But whatever you call them, their use in the structure of these templates does contribute to the angel's overall message.

Verse 10 and 11 Do Not Share the Same Present Time

The present time of v. 11 is not the present time of v. 10. The 6th ruler is present in v. 10 but absent in v. 11. Of the 7 rulers, only the 6th has a positive existence indicator and is referred to in the present time of v. 10. However, this same 6th ruler has a negative existence indicator in the present time of v. 11. Clearly, then the present times of vs. 10 and 11 are not the same.

We can observe that the present time of v. 11 has shifted forward. The present time of v. 11 is after the present time in v. 10. The contexts of v. 11 and v. 10 permit us to narrow the possible present time of v. 11.

The Individual Who Rules 6th is Also the 8th Ruler

The individual whom the angel marked out for further description in v. 10 is the 6th of the 7 rulers. In v. 11 the angel describes this individual as the beast who is also himself an 8th ruler, one that was from the group of 7. This description provided in the two phrases of v. 11 line 3, confirms that the 6th ruler of the previous verse is the subject of v. 11 because he is said to be one of the 7 previous rulers. Thus, from a consideration of the content of vs. 10 & 11, we know that the 6th ruler is himself also to be an 8th ruler, who will reign after the 7th. The Antichrist is both the 6th and 8th rulers.

The Present Time of v. 11 is Between the 6th & 8th Rulers

Having confirmed from these two verses that the beast is the Antichrist who will be both the 6th and 8th rulers, we can also determine more precisely the present time of v. 11. The 6th ruler who was existing in the present time of v. 10, is absent in the present time of v. 11. Also, as of the present time of v. 11 this 8th rule has not yet begun. We know this because the Antichrist, who will be this 8th ruler, is absent in the present time of v. 11. Therefore, the present time of v. 11 is between the rule of the Antichrist as the 6th and the 8th ruler.

The Present Time of v. 11 is During the Reign of the 7th Ruler

Since the present time of v. 11 is between the Antichrist's rule as the 6th and 8th ruler, it must be during the reign of the 7th ruler. During the 7th ruler's term, the Antichrist's authority as the 6th ruler is over, and his authority as an 8th ruler is yet to occur. The last line of Rev 17:10, which is in the distant future from the present time of v. 10, anticipates the 7th ruler's exercise of political authority.

Existence Indicator			
		Time Reference Indicator	
			Revelation 17:10 (author's translation)
Intro			<i>"and they are seven kings"</i>
Line 1	A	Past	<i>"five fell"</i>
Line 2	E	Present	<i>"one is,"</i>
Line 3	A	Future Near	<i>"the other did not yet come"</i>
Line 4	E	Future Distant	<i>"but whenever he does come it is required that he remain a little."</i>

The time reference indicator tells us that the events in this fourth line must occur after the present time of v. 10. The existence indicator demonstrates that the 7th ruler will exist in the distant future of v. 10. The last line of v. 10 is during the rule of the 7th ruler, which forms the present time of v. 11.

The Cohesive Unity of Revelation 17:10 & 11

The shift forward from the present time of v. 10 to v. 11 is from the reign of the 6th ruler in v. 10 to the reign of the 7th ruler in v. 11, just as the last line of v. 10 would indicate. The events in v. 11

begin just as the events in v. 10 conclude. The time perspective of vs. 10 & 11 are not unrelated, nor should we feel any time-related whiplash. The last line of v. 10 occurs during the 7th ruler's exercise of this authority, and the present time of v. 11 begins at the same point of time that v. 10 ends, during the 7th ruler's authority. This natural flow of time from the end of v. 10 into v. 11 will be important later when compared to several possible competing interpretations.

There is a cohesive unity between vs. 10 and 11. The descriptions of the events while the rotations of the rulers progress, including the

natural consistent flow of time in these two verses, demonstrate a significant continuity of message. The description of the political processes in the Roman confederation is not complete in v. 10. Verse 11 is a necessary component to the completion of the angel's message about the political workings of the Roman confederation and the Antichrist's role within it. Thus, neither can be fully appreciated if separated from the other.

The Political Events Affecting the Antichrist in Verses 10 & 11

We know what v. 10 is about, but what is the angel's message in v. 11? Just what is the angel trying to tell us about the Antichrist in this verse? As we go forward we will see that there are two related themes in the elegantly prepared literary pattern in Rev 17:11. The words of the angel in v. 11 can apply to the Antichrist's political presence in the present time of this verse.

<u>Revelation 17:11</u> (author's translation)		
Intro	<i>"And the beast which"</i>	
Line 1	<i>"was"</i>	- exercised power as the 6 th
Line 2	<i>"and is not,"</i>	- not in power during the 7 th
Line 3	<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is out of the seven,"</i>	- will rule again after the 7 th - because he was the 6 th
Line 4	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>	- as his ultimate destiny

It is possible, therefore, to apply the words of v. 11 to the political fortunes of the Antichrist. The angel's words indicating the beast's presence in the past can be applied to the Antichrist's reign as the 6th ruler. The absence of the beast in the present time of v. 11 can be applied to the Antichrist's absence from power during the current rule of the 7th ruler. The compound phrases indicating that the beast is himself an 8th ruler can be applied to the Antichrist's return to rule after the 7th rule has ended. The second of the compound phrases indicating that the beast is "out of" or from the group of the 7 also can be applied to the political rule of the Antichrist as the 6th ruler. The final line of v. 11 describes the ultimate destiny of the Antichrist as destruction.

The Shared Structure of vs. 8 & 11 Leads to Another Application

While there is a strong cohesive unity between vs. 10 & 11 concerning the Antichrist's political career, the nearly identical nature of v. 11's structure and language with the two literary patterns of vs. 8a & 8c cannot be ignored. Rev 17:8 involves the death and return to life of the Antichrist. Not only is this observed from the two literary patterns of vs. 8a & 8c, but also from the text of v. 8b. The angel's words in Rev 17:8b serve to draw us back to Rev 13:1-10, where similar language is used more extensively in the context of the Antichrist's fatal wounding and unexpected resurrection.

The angel's words in the two literary patterns and the intervening language occur in Rev 17:8, before he begins to consider the political positions of the Antichrist. For this reason, Rev 17:8 is not a prior presentation of the Antichrist's political rise.

While the death and return to life of the Antichrist as presented in Rev 17:8 and as portrayed in Rev 13:1-10 do have political ramifications for the Antichrist, Rev 17:8 is clearly only describing the reality of his murder and resurrection.

Revelation 17:8 & 11 Both Apply to the Same Events

Three of the five lines of vs. 8a & 11 are word-for-word the same and the introductory lines are nearly verbatim. This nearly identical construction between v. 8 and v. 11 creates a second cohesive unity that is different from that shared by vs. 10 & 11. This second unity forces us to recognize that the angel's words in v. 11 also have application to the Antichrist's death and return to life. We cannot ignore the force of v. 11's near identical construction with the two previous literary patterns in v. 8 that were clearly intended to apply to the Antichrist's death and resurrection.

Resolving the Seeming Dilemma of Dual Applications for v. 11

It might seem, therefore, that we are faced with a dilemma. Verse 11 forms strong cohesive unities with two different verses. These two strong unities create strong contextual forces that come to bear upon the meaning and application of v. 11. These two strong contextual forces, formed by v. 11's distinct unity with two different prior verses, appear to require two different applications of the same words in v.

11.

The idea of dual applications might seem to conflict with accepted interpretive principles. Herein lies the dilemma. Should we follow the immediate context of v. 11 in the description of the political fortunes of the Antichrist in v. 10, especially since v. 11 contains the compound phrases that directly address the political return of the Antichrist? Or should we follow the nearly identical nature and symmetry of the literary presentation of v. 11 with the two previous presentations of v. 8 in which the force of the patterns concerns the Antichrist's death and resurrection? Which of these two applications should we follow? The words of the angel in both applications seem clear and appropriate. Should v. 11 apply to the Antichrist's end and return to rule, or to the Antichrist's end and return to life?

Review of a Similar Problem in Revelation 17:9-10a

This is not the only place in this passage where we encounter dual applications of a prophetic statement. In Rev 17:9, the angel, perhaps to the dismay of some interpreters, declares that the imagery of the 7 heads of the beast has two separate applications: mountains *and* kings. Somehow both elements contribute to the full application of the image of the 7 heads. Do the angel's words in Rev 17:9-10a provide assistance in the seeming dilemma involving the meaning and application of v. 11?

Here is the mind which is having wisdom; The seven heads are seven mountains where the woman sits upon them, and they are seven kings,

Revelation 17:9-10a [*]

In order to avoid the dual application in v. 9, some may suggest that hills or mountains represent political power. This application is consistent with other Old Testament imagery. It is an attempt to avoid the uncomfortable position of having the same image applied to two different things. However, such an interpretation does not really resolve the issue. If the angel's use of the "seven hills" is regarded as kings, then the result of the angel's statement in Rev 17:9b would be redundant while adding no clarity.

*The seven heads are seven **kings** where the woman sits upon them, and they are seven **kings**.*

Revelation 17:9b - as some would interpret it

Another suggestion would have the 7 hills represent not “*kings*” but ‘kingdoms.’ This modification would see the “*seven hills*” as an image representing a ruling political authority rather than the individual who exercises that power. Thus, by slightly modifying the application from kings to kingdoms, those suggesting this view hope to avoid the redundancy of the previous view. Proceeding under this view of the “*seven hills*,” the angel’s words would be regarded as follows:

*The seven heads are seven **kingdoms** where the woman sits upon them, and they are seven **kings**.*

Revelation 17:9b - as some might interpret it

Unfortunately for any proponents of this view, the angel’s words must again be regarded as a dual application. Under this view, the angel’s use of “*seven hills*” is an image representing ‘seven political authorities’ or ‘kingdoms.’ However, since ‘kingdoms’ are not the same as “*kings*,” the angel’s meaning must still be regarded as being applicable to two different things.

Only Two Possibilities - Redundancy or Dual Applications

Given the angel’s deliberate selection of words, there are only two possibilities. First, the angel may have deliberately chosen his vocabulary to actually produce a redundant statement, or second, the angel’s deliberate intention was to apply the image of the 7 heads in a dual manner. Given these two alternatives, as uncomfortable as it may be for some interpreters, the angel seems to be actually applying one image to two separate entities.

If the angel wanted to firmly reveal the close connection between two elements, he might do so by having one image in a vision represent them both. The angel’s revelation then takes on a greater meaning. The angel desires us to know both their reality and their relationship to each other.

This is not a circumstance in which an interpreter chooses multiple applications for non-textual reasons. In this instance, the very words

spoken by the angel himself present the inescapable result that the intended meaning is to apply an image to two separate distinct elements. In the same verse, the angel states, "*Here is the mind which is having wisdom.*" Could the angel have meant that such wisdom is required, in part, to recognize the dual applications contained in the following verses?

Do Dual Applications in vs. 9-10a Help Us Interpret v. 11?

Does the application of v. 11 really present us with a dilemma? A closer consideration of the two strong contextual forces bearing upon this verse resolves any apparent conflict. Rev 17:11 should certainly be read in its context, including the political ramifications of the Antichrist that v. 10 brings to v. 11. Verse 11 should also be considered in light of its near identical construction with vs. 8a & 8c, in which the Antichrist's death and resurrection are clearly presented. The seeming dilemma is resolved when we recognize that the Antichrist's end and return to rule (v. 10) correspond to his end and return to life (v. 8).

Revelation 17:11 in Light of Our Examinations So Far

The angel presents the death and return to life of the Antichrist in two nearly identical literary patterns in vs. 8a & 8c, while placing material between them in v. 8b that draws us back to the previous, more extensive presentation of Rev 13:1-10. Then, after the angel has used literary art to twice convey the message that the Antichrist will die only to be returned to life, the angel announces in v. 9a that the mind which has wisdom is one that can perceive the angel's intended meaning in the intricate and elegant presentations of v. 8 and in those that follow. Next, the angel announces in Rev 17:9b -10a that the 7 heads of the beast apply to both the 7 mountains upon which the harlot sits, as well as the 7 kings or rulers of the Roman confederation.

In v. 10 the angel employs another literary pattern having the same number of lines as the first pattern of v. 8a and using those lines in the same way as both previous patterns of vs. 8a & 8c. In the literary pattern of v. 10, the angel describes a rotation or progression of the 7 kings. The 7 rulers do not all operate in the same role simultaneously. The 7 rulers follow one another. The primary force of v. 10, however, is

to single out the 6th ruler in this rotation. By this use of both the time reference and existence indicators, and his distinctive designations for the 7 rulers, the angel makes it clear that he is highlighting this 6th ruler for further consideration. Through his literary art, the angel marks out the 6th ruler in the progression of the 7 as the one who is described further in v. 11.

Dual Application of Verse 11 is Required by Contextual Forces

It is in v. 11 that this 6th ruler is called the beast. In v. 8 the angel prepares us to consider the impact of the death and return to life of the Antichrist. Then in v. 10 the angel describes previously unknown aspects of the role of the 7 heads. Within the literary pattern of v. 10, the angel describes the political rise of an individual and the nature of the political structure through which he ascends. In v. 11, the angel further identifies this individual as the beast himself and how he will be both absent and returning in his political fortunes, *and* in his life.

Existence Indicator			
		Time Reference Indicator	
		<u>Revelation 17:10</u> (author's translation)	
Intro		<i>"and they are seven kings"</i>	
Line 1	A	Past	<i>"five fell"</i>
Line 2	E	Present	<i>"one is,"</i>
Line 3	A	Future Near	<i>"the other did not yet come"</i>
Line 4	E	Future Distant	<i>"but whenever he does come it is required that he remain a little."</i>

Dual Applications are Woven Together into a Seamless Whole

In v. 11 the angel's literary art is on full display. Rev 17:11 is a deliberate amalgam in that the political considerations of the previous verse are addressed together with the most important question still left unanswered - When? In v. 11 the angel weaves together the various threads of the Antichrist's death & renewed life and the threads concerning his eventual rise towards complete domination. The angel combines the final political step in the Antichrist's rise to power with the Antichrist's rise from the dead because his return from

the dead and his return to ruling power are so intertwined in their actual unfolding.

Second Look at the Strong Interpretive Forces Bearing on v. 11

The strong contextual forces converging upon v. 11 derive their individual influence from the separate cohesive nature v. 8 and v. 10 share with v. 11. These two contextual forces represent the two distinct series of events portrayed in vs. 8 & 10. The set of events portrayed in v. 8 involves the Antichrist's death and resurrection. The two literary patterns in v. 8 find themselves nearly replicated in the close symmetrical structure and language in v. 11. This unity between vs. 8 & 11 brings unusually strong interpretational forces to bear upon the application of v. 11.

The second set of events is portrayed in vs. 10-11 and involves the Antichrist's loss and recovery of political authority within the structure of the revived Roman rule. The forward progression of events through the lines of v. 10 flows into and is taken up in v. 11. The timing of the events in v. 10 flows seamlessly into the continuing political events portrayed in v. 11.

Revelation 17:10-11 (author's translation)

"And they are seven kings"

"the five fell"

- Rulers 1-5 are done

"the one is"

- Ruler 6 has governing authority

"the other did not come yet"

- Ruler 7 is not yet in power

"but whenever he may come"

- Ruler 7 will come & stay a while

it is required that he remain a little"

"And the beast which"

"was"

- Ruler 6 did, in fact, rule politically

"and is not"

- Ruler 6 doesn't rule during 7th rule

"is himself also an eighth"

- Ruler 6 will be the 8th ruler

and is out of the seven"

- Ruler 6 is one of the 7 rulers

"and into destruction he goes"

- Ruler 6 will ultimately be destroyed

The flow of events in v. 10 continues into v. 11. Just as v. 10 anticipated the coming of the 7th ruler while the 6th ruler was in power, so also v. 11 anticipates the coming of the 8th ruler while the 7th ruler is in

power. In the near future of v. 11, we discover that the Antichrist, who was the 6th ruler, will himself be an 8th ruler. The anticipated 8th ruler is the 6th ruler, who is one of the group of 7. During the present time of v. 11, the past exercise of authority by the 6th ruler is acknowledged in line 1, the present exercise of governing authority by the 7th ruler is implied in line 2, and the 6th ruler's return to political authority as the 8th ruler is anticipated in line 3.

The Cohesive Nature of the Political Set of Events in vs. 10-11

The cohesive unity between vs. 8 and 11 is seen in their similar construction and content. The seamless presentation of all 8 rulers from v. 10 line 1 through v. 11 line 4 also demonstrates the unified nature existing between vs. 10 & 11. Just as the cohesive nature of v. 8 with v. 11 produces an unusually strong interpretational force upon the application of v. 11, so the cohesive nature between vs. 10 & 11, although different from v. 8, is nevertheless just as strong, and produces a second interpretational force which also comes to bear upon the application of v. 11.

The Separate Unifying Elements of vs. 8 & 11 and vs. 10 & 11

The converging contextual forces derive their influence from the separate and different connection each verse shares with v. 11. Thus, we realize that the converging contextual forces do have a common objective. The two sets of events are interwoven by the angel, who fixes their culmination in v. 11, especially in line 3, because it is here that all the contextual forces come to bear to explain the rise of the final form of the beast. The nexus of these two series of events in v. 11 is nothing less than the completion of the Rise of the Antichrist.

Absence from Political Power is the Result of Absence from Life, Return to Life Propels the Antichrist's Return to Political Power

The absence of the Antichrist in v. 11 must apply to his absence from political authority, because the present time of this verse is during the authority of the 7th ruler. The absence of the Antichrist in v. 11 must *also* apply to the Antichrist's absence from life during some period of time in the 7th ruler's exercise of authority. The extremely similar construction between the literary presentations in v. 11 and v. 8 forces

us to recognize that the angel purposefully intended these literary connections. He reproduces the literary patterns of v. 8 in v. 11 to demonstrate how the death and resurrection of the Antichrist intersect with his political fortunes. In doing so, aspects of their chronology are revealed.

The full application of the angel's literary art is that the Antichrist's death and return to life are integral events in his political rise. This absence from life for the Antichrist through a violent attack with a deadly weapon occurs when the Antichrist is also absent from power over the Roman confederation, either because the violent attack ended his life and thus his 6th rule, or because the fatal attack occurred during the 7th rotation after the 6th rotation is completed. The return to life precedes the Antichrist's return to power as the 8th ruler. The Antichrist's return to life amazes the world, which then supports his rise back to power. His defeat of death propels his political rise and allows him to succeed in securing the total domination of the empire's political and bureaucratic machinery.

If v. 11 Applied Only to the Antichrist's Death and Resurrection

If some may say that Rev 17:11 is only a restatement of the Antichrist's death and return to life and has no application to any political consideration of the Antichrist, then how do we apply the compound phrases on line 3?

	<u>Revelation 17:11</u> (author's translation)
Intro	<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

These compound phrases occur in this literary pattern on the line where we would expect to find some mention of a return to life. Rev 17:8a & 8c both contain return to life language in the 3rd line of their respective patterns. The compound phrases on line 3, however, refer

to an unknown 8th ruler who is himself one of the previous 7. This clear political reference at the very location in the literary pattern where we have twice previously read words referring to the Antichrist's return to life, argues powerfully against v. 11 as referring again only to the death and return to life of the Antichrist.

If Rev 17:11 had application only to the Antichrist's loss and regaining of life, not only would this verse be a redundant statement, it would seem completely out of place contextually. Also, the description of the political process within the revived Roman rule that began in v. 10 would be left incomplete. One would have to deny the seemingly clear connection that vs. 10 & 11 share if v. 11 applies only to the death and resurrection of the Antichrist. If Rev 17:11 is not held as also applying to the political fortunes of the Antichrist then this set of events is left unfulfilled.

If v. 11 Applied Only to the Antichrist's Political Fortunes

If some may oppositely say that Rev 17:11 has application only to the political fortunes of the Antichrist, then how are we to regard the symmetry and close literary similarities between v. 11 and vs. 8a & 8c, which are deliberately prepared literary descriptions of the Antichrist's death and return to life? The compound phrases themselves, which do have application politically to the Antichrist in v. 11, are found within the now familiar literary patterns so closely connected with the description of the Antichrist's death and renewed life. The force of this now three-fold literary presentation cannot be ignored or reduced.

Dual Application of v. 11 is Required by the Contextual Forces

Having carefully considered the text and context of Rev 17:8-11, we see that v. 11 is a culminating presentation in which the violent intentional killing of the Antichrist and his return to life occurs during the same period of time that his political fortunes are seemingly lost and amazingly restored. It is only by recognizing that Rev 17:11 is intended to address the close timing of these two intertwined aspects that the full application of the angel's words can be realized. These two aspects are woven together in v. 11 because the two future

historical realities will be interwoven in the rise of the Antichrist. There is a linkage between the Antichrist's death & resurrection and the ending & recovering of the Antichrist's political power.

The Timing of Both Sets of Events

Therefore, since they are linked, knowing the timing of the one set of events allows us to more closely narrow down the likely time for the occurrence of the other set. Now that we are in possession of the timing of the Antichrist's loss and recovery of political power, the timing of the Antichrist's violent death and resurrection can be discerned with greater precision. Thus, the question 'when does the Antichrist lose his life?' begins to be answered by the question 'when does the Antichrist lose political power?' Similarly, the question 'when does the Antichrist live again?' is answered by the question 'when does the Antichrist rule again?' The angel's words in Rev 17:8-11 need no longer seem obscure and puzzling, but instead can be appreciated for the rich literary skill he employed as he reveals the forces at work in the progressive rise of the Antichrist.

Specific Scenarios Based Upon the Relevant Passages

In the previous portion of this chapter, we examined the various prophetic passages that speak to the timing of the Antichrist's death and resurrection. It remains, therefore, to construct a scenario of events that is consistent with the content of the relevant passages including the contextual forces at work within them.

The Permissible Scenarios - Preliminary Considerations

The present times of Rev 17:10 and 17:11 are now fixed in relation to each other and to the progression of the 7 rulers as they rotate through their terms of authority. Since the present time of v. 11 is during the time of the 7th ruler, the Antichrist's resurrection must occur sometime during the 7th ruler's authority. His resurrection cannot occur prior to the 7th ruler because the Antichrist is still alive and exercising his prerogatives as the 6th ruler. The resurrection of the Antichrist cannot occur after the 7th ruler because he must already be alive to rule as the 8th ruler. However, being certain of the period during which the Antichrist is resurrected does not necessarily allow

us to fix with the same certainty the time when he dies.

Two Conclusions about the Antichrist's Death and Resurrection

Locating the present time of Rev 17:11 with certainty during the 7th ruler's exercise of authority permits two important conclusions. First, that the Antichrist must be resurrected during the 7th rule, and second, that the Antichrist must be dead during some period of the 7th ruler.

	<u>Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)</u>
Intro	<i>"And the beast which"</i>
Line 1	<i>"was"</i>
Line 2	<i>"and is not,"</i>
Line 3	<i>"is himself also an eighth, and is out of the seven,"</i>
Line 4	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

The second line of v. 11 tells us that the Antichrist is dead during this verse's present time, which occurs sometime during the 7th rule. However, line 2 does not indicate when the Antichrist dies, only that he is dead during the present time of v. 11.

Permissible Scenarios

At the present time of v. 11, the Antichrist is dead and the 7th ruler is in power. The resurrection of the Antichrist will also occur during the 7th rotation. We know when the Antichrist is dead and when his resurrection will occur, but we do not know precisely the moment of his death. There are two possibilities. The Antichrist's death must occur either prior to or during that 7th rule. Therefore, the Antichrist is either killed during the 6th rotation of the supreme executive, or he is killed after the 7th rule has begun. Either scenario has the Antichrist dead sometime during the 7th ruler's time in authority.

Antichrist's Death & Resurrection and Other Prophetic Events

In Chapter One we briefly looked at how long the 8th ruler of Rev 17:11 will be in power. We saw that the reign of the 8th ruler

corresponds with the same length of time specified in Rev 13:5 and Dan 7:25.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

Revelation 13:5

And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7:25

That span of time is expressed differently in these two verses but is the same length. Knowing that the reign of the 8th ruler will be 3 ½ years tells us that all 7 rulers must complete their separate terms in office prior to the midpoint of the 7-year strong covenant of Dan 9:27.

If the final 8th ruler reigns uninterrupted for the last 3 ½ years of this covenant, then we know that the Antichrist begins his reign as the 8th ruler about the same time that the Abomination of Desolation occurs (Dan 9:27, 12:11), and covers the same period that the two witnesses to Jesus are prophesying in sackcloth (Rev 11:3ff). We also know that at this time the sacrifices at the Jewish Temple will be halted (Dan 9:27) and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles for the next 42 months (Luke 21:24, Rev 11:2). By this time the Antichrist will have ruled as the 6th supreme executive of the confederation (Rev 17:10), will have been violently attacked with a deadly weapon (Rev 13:3, 12, 14), and will have both died and been resurrected to new life (Rev 13:3, 12, 14, 17:8, 11).

How Long are the First 7 Ruler's Rotations?

Some may wonder if all 7 rotations through the office of the supreme executive could be placed during the first half of the 70th week of years. While such a chronology does not conflict with the prophetic passages, there is no direct support for it either. As stated above, we do know that the beginning of the 8th ruler's authority must signal the end of the 7th ruler's term. We can also place this critical turning point

at or very near the midpoint of that final 7-year agreement. So, we know when the 7 rotations end, but we cannot directly connect their beginning to the start of the strong covenant or any other known prophetic event. [[41](#)] Therefore, we cannot know how long the 7 rulers exercise authority.

Concluding Thoughts

The Apostle John sees a vision which he strives to share with his readers in Rev 17:3-6. The angel provides John with the explanation of this vision. The portion of this explanation which concerns the beast with 7 heads and 10 horns includes the brief section of Rev 17:8-11. In this section, the angel's explanation involves the prophetic significance of the 7 heads of the beast and is found to contain elegantly prepared literary presentations in which the angel introduces the reader to new information and reconfirms previous understandings.

The angel presents these elements of old and new disclosures by first presenting one series of events and their unfolding, then presenting a second series of events as they also unfold. Finally, the angel ends this brief section by carefully revealing how both of these two different series of events intersect, intertwine, and converge in the history of one individual. The angel does all of this for the reader through the creation of four literary presentations that are sparing in words and yet profound in meaning and message. Even as we may admire the literary skill and intelligence of this heavenly messenger, the implications of his message are horrifying.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE POWER AND INFLUENCE OF THE EMPIRE'S TWO RELIGIONS

Before the Antichrist is killed and resurrected, 6 regions remain beyond his control. Allied with these 6 regions will be a great worldwide religious system. However, the Antichrist's resurrection before the entire world ignites wonder and worship, eroding legitimacy and support from this ubiquitous religion. The world's population increasingly abandons the great religious system and begins instead to follow the resurrected Antichrist. After he is installed as the 8th supreme executive, the Antichrist consolidates his hold on power over the entire confederation. Previously, the Antichrist subjugated 3 other regions. Now as the 8th ruler he dominates all 10. As the 8th ruler, the Antichrist now exercises complete control over areas once governed as 10 semiautonomous regions. The Antichrist also exacts revenge upon the remainder of the great worldwide religious system that opposed him. Along with the 10 'rulers' who implement his will, the Antichrist will destroy the religious system and the city that serves as its base of support. So complete is the Antichrist's domination that he alone is now the empire.

What information is in our possession that can help us discover the meaning of the woman and her relationship with the beast? The problem is not that we have too little information. Rather, it is a matter of correctly correlating what we do know. As we read Revelation chapters 17 - 18, we find four very helpful pieces of

information. The woman's influence is worldwide. The woman is not the beast, but does have a close relationship with a revived form of the beast. The woman is called a "*great city*." The woman has titles like names written across her forehead.

The Woman's Worldwide Influence

The first category of information concerns the great harlot's ubiquitous influence. The effect she has worldwide is repeatedly stressed. The first time we read about this great harlot in Revelation, we see that her influence spans "*the nations*" and that its corrupting nature brings judgment.

And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

Revelation 14:8

Here the woman is called "*Babylon the great*." She will provide an intoxicating elixir of passionate spiritual adultery to "*all the nations*."

In Revelation 17, the angel begins to describe the great harlot to the Apostle John with these words:

Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth practiced immorality, and those who dwell on the earth became drunk from the wine of her immorality.

Revelation 17:1b-2 [*]

The angel indicates that the extent of this great harlot's influence is seen specifically by those who participate in her fornication. Both "*the rulers of the earth*," and "*those who dwell on the earth*" allow her to corrupt them. The angel himself explains the symbolism of the "*many waters*" upon which the woman sits:

And he said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues."

Revelation 17:15

This is completely consistent with the previous statements concerning

the extent of this woman's corrupting influence. Her reach is truly vast.

Further confirmation of the vast extent of this corruption is found in Revelation 18, where another angel cries out.

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her,

Revelation 18:2b-3b

Again, the angel says to the great harlot:

" ... because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery."

Revelation 18:23b

The overwhelming testimony of Scripture is that this great harlot's reach will be worldwide and that her influence will be horribly corrupting.

The Woman's Separateness from the Beast

Next, we see the great harlot's association with the Roman governmental system. In addition to sitting upon the many waters, which represent "*peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues*" (Rev 17:15), the woman also sits upon the beast.

And I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, being filled with names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:3b [*]

There are two important implications in this aspect of John's vision. First, the harlot is separate from the beast. The great harlot is not the beast. She is not an aspect of the revived Roman power. The beast and the great harlot are two separate entities. Second, the great harlot and the beast have a close relationship. The worldwide corrupting woman has an ongoing relationship with the revived Roman power. The revived Roman power supports the woman. [[42](#)]

The Woman Sits upon the 7 Ruler Form of the Confederation

We should take special notice of the form of Roman power that supports the great harlot. The structure of Roman power changes. The Roman confederation of 10 semi-independent regions has been altered at some point by the Antichrist's aggression. When the angel begins his explanation in Revelation 17, the Roman confederation has 7 decision-makers or rulers controlling the power of the 10 regions. The angel shows that the revived Roman power exists then in a 7-headed & 10-horned form. This form of the Roman confederation exists after the Antichrist has gained an undisputed rule of one region himself, and after he has subdued 3 other regions. It is at this stage that the angel begins to explain the harlot's interaction and close relationship with the confederation. John's vision reveals how much the Roman confederation changed from its original structure.

The Woman Is Not Sitting upon the 8th Ruler

How long does this relationship continue? The angel's curious words assist us in fixing the time when the supportive relationship with the mutating beast begins to change.

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits and they are seven kings.

Revelation 17:9-10a

The angel's words here remind us that the 7 heads of the beast represent the 7 non-dominated regional rulers. We have already discussed the puzzling symbolism of heads and horns. Our attention, for now, should be focused on a different curiosity. Neither the angel nor the Apostle John mentions an 8th ruler until v. 11. Rev 17:11 specifically says that the beast himself is also an 8th ruler, yet the form of the revived Roman power that interacts in a supporting way with the great harlot has no 8th ruler. Twice the woman is described as "sitting" upon the 7 rulers of the beast (Rev 17:3 & 9-10a). Yet these two references do not mention this 8th ruler. Among the many implications is that the supportive relationship that exists between the harlot and the beast exists before the 8th ruler comes along. The 7-headed & 10-horned form of the empire has a close relationship with the harlot. This will not be true when the 8th ruler comes to power.

The Woman's Relationship with the 8th Ruler Ends Badly

There is only one mention of any interaction between the great harlot and the revived Roman power beyond the time of the 7th ruler. This one point of contact is truly significant. After the 8th ruler comes to power, a drastic change can be observed in the beast's relationship with the harlot.

And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.

Revelation 17:16

The supportive close interrelationship with the 7-headed form of Roman power has ended. While the 10 horns are mentioned, the former 7 heads or rulers are not. The former '7 ruler' form of the Roman power is gone. The 8th ruler and his 10 administrators now represent the operating form of Roman power and they hate the harlot. The supportive interrelationship which the harlot enjoyed with the previous stage of the beast is over. Now the beast destroys the great harlot.

Mutual advantage is the underlying foundation for relationships among powerful entities. The '7-ruler & 10-region' form of Roman power found a relationship with the great harlot beneficial. The following form of the empire's power, a one-man rule with 10 regional administrators, apparently finds no ongoing benefit from a relationship with the great harlot. On the contrary, this dictatorial form of power, this phase of the beast, finds it advantageous to destroy her.

Thus, we are able to observe from the texts themselves that the great harlot is not the beast nor any part of the beast, though initially, she enjoys a close supportive relationship with the form of Roman power operating at that time. The worldwide influential harlot is supported by the 7-ruler & 10-region form of the revived Roman power. However, when that stage of Roman power changes, so does its supportive relationship with the great harlot. The dictatorial rule of the Antichrist as the 8th ruler, along with his 10 regional administrators, hate the great harlot with such intensity that they completely destroy it.

The Woman's Identification with a Great City

The third piece of information about the woman involves her association with a great city. These words are the angel's last and bring his explanation of the mystery to a close.

And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

Revelation 17:18

This short sentence says much. The angel finally discloses the meaning of the harlot. The harlot is the great city. Notice, the great harlot is not just any city. The great harlot is "*the great city*." The identity of the "*great city*" is further defined as one "*which reigns over the kings of the earth*." The way the angel describes this city leaves little doubt that there can only be one such city "*of the earth*" at that time.

Where the Woman Sits

Additional information about this great city's identity can be found in the angel's description. Specifically, in what she "*sits*" on. The woman is said to be sitting on several things in Revelation 17. First, when the angel initially describes the woman, she is sitting "*on many waters*" (v. 1). Second, when John first sees the great harlot, she is sitting on a "*beast*" with 7 heads and 10 horns (v. 3). Third, the angel again says the woman is sitting on 7 mountains.

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains where the woman sits upon them, and they are seven kings.

Revelation 17:9-10a [*]

The same Greek verb is found in all 3 uses (17:1, 3, 9). In this context, "*sitting*" on something means that she is supported by it. The "*many waters*" she sits on in v. 1 is explained as vast multitudes of different language and ethnic groups (v. 15). When John sees her, she is supported by the 7-headed & 10-horned phase of the revived Roman power.

When we see the woman sitting for the third time in v. 9, we begin to

see the connection between the 7 heads of the beast and their geographic location. The great harlot is “*sitting*” on the 7 hills or mountains. [43] Just as the angel gave us further information about the first thing the woman sits on in v. 15, now he gives us further information about this third thing she sits on in v. 18.

And the woman which you saw is the great city which is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth.

Revelation 17:18 [*]

The great harlot is not just found within a seven-hilled city, she is that city.

The Woman is Rome

The woman is “*the great city which is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth.*” Therefore, the great harlot is a 7-hilled city that dominates the earth. When the Apostle John wrote down his visions there was only one city that matched this description. Rome was the heart of the Roman Empire, a 7-hilled city that dominated the kings of the earth. [44]

The 7 Ruler Form of Power is Administered from Rome

The angel’s words in Rev 17:9-10a place the location of the 7 rulers of the confederation also in Rome. The 7 ruler stage of Roman power, the stage of Roman power that is closely supportive of the great harlot, is closely identified with Rome. That the geographic location of the great worldwide harlot is also the administrative center of this phase of the beast’s power explains why John’s vision shows the woman “*sitting*” upon the beast (Rev 17:3). Their close, mutually beneficial interrelationship can be appreciated when the key information from the angel in Rev 17:18 is supplied. The woman “*is the great city which is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth.*”

The 8th Ruler Will Hate What Rome Is and Destroy Her

The angel indicates in Rev 17:16 that the Antichrist as the 8th ruler, along with his 10 regional administrators, will no longer see any advantage in keeping the city of Rome in a close relationship. They

will hate Rome.

and having made her desolate will make her also naked, and her flesh they will eat, and they will consume her in fire.

Revelation 17:16b [*]

What is Lost in Rome's Destruction?

The rise of the Antichrist as the 8th ruler initiates a regime change in the revived Roman power. The last vestiges of the Roman confederation are removed when the Antichrist destroys Rome. With the destruction of Rome, the whole world knows that the former things are *gone*. The seductive materialism is *gone*. The 7-hilled and 'Eternal City' is no more. Only the Antichrist remains. [45]

The Titles Written Across the Woman's Forehead

In his vision, John sees something written on the woman's forehead.

and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Revelation 17:5

Each of these titles further defines just what the woman represents.

"The Mother of Harlots"

In exploring the meaning of these titles, the second will be considered first. The woman is called the "*Mother of Harlots*." How should we understand the word translated as "*harlot*"? The Greek term used for the woman is πόρνη (porna). By the time of the New Testament, this term had come to mean any inappropriate sexual intercourse. [46]

In nearly every description of the woman her infidelity is mentioned. What should we understand about the woman and the city of Rome from this term? Is there a previous use of this metaphor which provides insight into the angel's descriptions of the woman's sexual impurity?

The Old Testament Metaphor of "Harlot"

The metaphor of a harlot or prostitute is found frequently in the Old

Testament. The Hebrew root זָנָה and its derivatives carry the meaning of sexual intercourse that violates marriage or a formal union such as betrothal. [47] It is for this reason that Israel was often called a זָנָה - “harlot” because of her frequent straying into the practice of worshiping foreign gods.

The Metaphor of “Harlot” as Used of Israel

Israel had a covenant relationship with the Lord. She willingly bound herself to him (Exod 19:8, 24:3, Deut 5:27, 26:17). When Israel worshiped the gods of neighboring nations, she was being unfaithful to the Lord. Just as a Hebrew woman would be guilty of being a זָנָה - “harlot” if she engaged in sexual activity that violated her vows of marriage or betrothal, so Israel was a “harlot” when she worshiped other gods. The Lord spoke of Israel’s straying through the prophet Jeremiah.

*“I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth,
The love of your betrothals,
Your following after Me in the wilderness,
Through a land not sown.”*

Jeremiah 2:2

*Thus says the Lord,
“What injustice did your fathers find in Me,
That they went far from Me
And walked after emptiness and became empty?”*

Jeremiah 2:5

*“The priests did not say, ‘Where is the Lord?’
And those who handle the law did not know Me;
The rulers also transgressed against Me,
And the prophets prophesied by Baal
And walked after things that did not profit.”*

Jeremiah 2:8

*“Has a nation changed gods,
When they were not gods?
But my people have changed their glory
For that which does not profit.*

*“Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
And shudder, be very desolate” declared the Lord*

*“For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”*

Jeremiah 2:11-13

*“Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
Or a bride her attire?
Yet My people have forgotten Me
Days without number.”*

Jeremiah 2:32

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My Covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them.”

Jeremiah 31:31-32

In these passages, we feel the Lord’s anguish. He was faithful to Israel but was repaid with repeated public rejection. Israel’s unfaithfulness was like a wife’s infidelity.

The Worship of Fertility gods Included Sexual Activity

Offerings made to idols for the fertility of crops and animals, even for the offspring of sons and daughters, led to idolatrous fertility rituals in which sexual activity was part of the worship itself. Integral to such worship was sexual activity through cult prostitutes, both male and female, who offered themselves as part of the fertility ritual and worship experience. These were the religious practices of Israel’s Canaanite neighbors. [48]

Israel Occasionally Strayed into Fertility ‘Worship’ Rituals

Israel herself fell into aspects of idol worship repeatedly. God,

therefore, refers to Israel's spiritual infidelity as prostitution and harlotry because these sexual sins were seen regularly by the ancient Israelites among the neighboring nations, and among even their own corrupt worship of the Lord. [[49](#)]

"Harlotry" in Prohibitions Against Idolatry & Sexual Perversion

God had revealed himself in truth to the people he had chosen. The issue of spiritual harlotry is addressed in the laws which would govern Israel's corporate and individual relationship to him. It is not coincidental that Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness is addressed in combination with sexual sins.

And you shall not have intercourse with your neighbor's wife, to be defiled with her. Neither shall you give any of your offspring to offer them to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God; I am the Lord. You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination.

Leviticus 18:20-22

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "You shall also say to the sons of Israel, 'Any man from the sons of Israel or from any alien sojourning in Israel, who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. ... If the people of the land, however, should ever disregard that man when he gives any of his offspring to Molech, so as not to put him to death, then I Myself will set My face against that man and against his family, and I will cut off from among their people both him and all those who play the harlot after him, by playing the harlot after Molech. As to the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists, to play the harlot after them, I will also set My face against that person and will cut him off from among his people.'"

Leviticus 20:1-2, 4-6

Who Was "Molech" and How Was He Worshiped

The Hebrew term for Molech has traditionally been understood as a combination of the Hebrew words "king" (melech) and "shame" (boshet). The vowels of the word for "king" were replaced with those

from the word “shame.” Thus, “Molech” is a deliberate mispronunciation in which the concepts of shame and king are intermingled. The god-king (melech) was associated in the readers’ minds with action that should bring shame (boshet). [50] Molech worship included human sacrifice. Specifically, children were burned up by their parents. [51] We should take note that the condemnation of child sacrifice in Molech worship rituals appears with condemnations of sexual immorality.

The Metaphor of “Harlotry” in Israel’s Spiritual Unfaithfulness

Just as an adulterous woman abandons her husband to find lustful pleasure, protection, or security in the arms of another man, so also those in a formal relationship with God commit acts of spiritual fornication or adultery when they abandon the true God to seek favor, pleasure, protection, provision, and security in any of the false gods or religions that the imagination creates.

Jerusalem Becomes a Harlot - Ezekiel 16

In Ezekiel 16, God describes his care of Jerusalem, which he took from very humble origins and raised up to beauty and splendor. But having found herself desirable, Jerusalem “*played the harlot.*”

But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer by who might be willing. ... Moreover, you took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me, and you sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter? You slaughtered My children, and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through the fire. And beside all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth. ... You adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!

Ezekiel 16:15, 20-22, 32

Notice, the Lord says that Jerusalem sacrificed the children born to him. The Lord views the children which were sacrificed in fire to another god as his own - “*You slaughtered My children.*”

The Harlotry of Samaria & Jerusalem - Ezekiel 23

In Ezekiel 23, the Lord describes the spiritual unfaithfulness of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The capitals of these two kingdoms were Samaria and Jerusalem. In this chapter, these two cities, which represent their nations, are vividly portrayed as adulterous sisters who prostitute themselves among the powerful nations of their time.

The word of the Lord came to me again saying, "Son of Man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother; and they played the harlot in Egypt. They played the harlot in their youth; ... And their names were Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister. And they became Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. And as for their names, Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem is Oholibah.

"And Oholah played the harlot while she was Mine; and she lusted after her lovers, after the Assyrians, her neighbors, ... And she bestowed her harlotries on them, all of whom were the choicest men of Assyria; and with all whom she lusted after, with all their idols she defiled herself. And she did not forsake her harlotries from the time in Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her. ... Therefore, I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, after whom she lusted. They uncovered her nakedness; they took her sons and her daughters, but they slew her with the sword. Thus she became a byword among women, and they executed judgments on her.

"Now her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more corrupt in her lust than she, and her harlotries were more than the harlotries of her sister. She lusted after the Assyrians, ... So she increased her harlotries. And she saw men portrayed on the wall, images of the Chaldeans. ... like the Babylonians in Chaldea. ... And when she saw them she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. And the Babylonians came to her to the bed of love, and they defiled her with their harlotry. ... Then I became disgusted with her, as I had become disgusted with her sister. Yet she multiplied her harlotries, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt. ... "Therefore, O Oholibah," thus says the Lord God, 'Behold I will arouse your lovers against you, ... the Babylonians and all the

Chaldeans ... and all the Assyrians with them ... And they will come against you with weapons, chariots, and wagons, ... And they will deal with you in hatred, take away all your property, and leave you naked and bare. And the nakedness of your harlotries shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotries. These things will be done to you because you have played the harlot with the nations, because you have defiled yourself with their idols.” ...

Moreover, the Lord said to me, “Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations. For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols and even caused their sons, whom they bore to Me, to pass through the fire to them as food. Again, they have done this to Me: they have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and have profaned My sabbaths. For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, they entered My sanctuary on the same day to profane it; and lo, thus they did within My house.”

Ezekiel 23:1-3a; 4-5; 7-8a; 9-12a; 14a; 15b-17a; 18b-19; 22a; 23a; 24a; 29-30; 36-39

“Harlotry” in the Church’s Spiritual Unfaithfulness

Three of the seven churches heard stern words from the Lord when the book of Revelation reached them. The metaphor of sexual immorality is used to convey spiritual unfaithfulness by those who have a formal relationship with the Lord.

And to the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ... “But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.”

Revelation 2:1a, 4-5

And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ... “I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; ... But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols,

and to commit acts of immorality. ... Repent therefore; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth."

Revelation 2:12a, 13a, 14, 16

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ... "I know your deeds, ... But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds."

Revelation 2:18a, 19a, 20-23

The believers in Ephesus were told to return to their first love. The believers in Pergamum were rebuked because among them were those who promoted teachings having to do with idols and "acts of immorality." The word translated as "immorality" is from the same Greek root πόρνη which is part of the woman's title - "The Mother of Harlots." They could also be translated as "acts of harlotry." The believers in Thyatira were warned about the presence of "Jezebel." She also advocated food sacrificed to idols and acts of harlotry. The Lord would cast her upon a bed, not of harlotry as she is used to, but this time of illness. She had not repented of her harlotries.

Are Gentile Cities Called "Harlots" in the Old or New Testament?

As we look at how the Old Testament metaphor of "harlot" may be at work in Revelation 17, a few questions come to mind. One question is whether the Old Testament ever uses the metaphor of spiritual prostitution to describe a Gentile city? After all, while Jerusalem and Samaria were inhabited by Israelites, the future "Babylon the Great" appears to be solidly Gentile.

Israel is repeatedly accused of acting as a זִנָּה - "harlot" through her

participation in the worship rituals for the gods of other nations. Gentiles, however, did not possess a formal relationship with the Lord, so their worship of idols and the rituals associated with them, while abominable to the Lord, are not called זונה - "harlotry." The Gentiles did not 'stray' from the worship of the true God as Israel had done, so their idolatry does not fit with the idea of spiritual 'adultery'.

Even still, Gentile cities are denounced using the Hebrew word for "harlot," but only twice - Tyre (Isa 23:15-18) and Nineveh (Nah 3:4). These two Gentile cities enticed Israel to violate her relationship with the Lord. They acted like harlots because they tried to seduce the nations. They seduced Israel to abandon its special relationship to God and adopt their lifestyles and priorities. Tyre's lure was her incredible material wealth. Nineveh's attraction was her political and military power.

As we have seen, Christ's letters to the 7 churches contain references that seem to connect the metaphor of sexual impurity to spiritual unfaithfulness. Rev 2:14-15 has Christ comparing the spiritual harlotry to which Israel was tempted by Balaam to a sect in the church at Pergamum called the Nicolaitans. In Rev 2:20 Christ expresses anger with those in the church at Thyatira for tolerating a woman he calls Jezebel who *"teaches and leads My bondservants astray, so that they commit acts of harlotry."* There was a formal bond between Christ and the believers in these 2 churches. The use of πόρνῃ - "harlotry" in Revelation 2 would seem consistent with how the metaphor of a זונה is used in the Old Testament. Thus, of the 7 predominately Gentile churches who receive messages from Christ in the beginning chapters of Revelation, 2 are warned about their conduct using the language of sexual infidelity. This helps answer the next question about the ancient and future Babylons.

Curiously, Ancient Babylon Is Never Described as a Harlot

There is another even larger question. As we look at how the Old Testament metaphor of "harlotry" might be used in Revelation 17-18, we notice similarities and differences in the crimes for which they are punished by God. There are many allusions and quotations from the Old Testament in Revelation 14-19 involving ancient Babylon. Yet

when we look back at the original Old Testament contexts from which these quotations and allusions are taken, we do not find any reference to זנה - "prostitution, harlotry." This is surprising since the Old Testament prophets have much to say about Babylon's judgment. Not included in her crimes, however, is an indictment for harlotry. So, while ancient Babylon is strongly condemned for its idolatry and occult practices in the Old Testament, these activities in the ancient city are never called prostitution. Yet the future city of "*Babylon the Great*" in Revelation 14-19 is called the "*Mother of Harlots*." Why is "*Babylon the Great*" accused of spiritual prostitution even though ancient Babylon was not?

We find imagery and phrasing in the condemnations from Revelation 17 & 18 against Babylon the Great that are very similar to those in the prophetic judgments against ancient Babylon. This is a point of connection between the old and future cities. But in Revelation 17 we find that Babylon the Great is also called the "*Mother of Harlots*" while none of the Old Testament's judgments against ancient Babylon involve the idea of spiritual adultery. This is a point of distance between the old and future cities.

Why Does Revelation Use "Harlotry" of Babylon?

If we are correct in understanding the way the Old Testament used זנה for Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness to her God, then the reason why the ancient and future Babylons are treated differently is obvious. While ancient Babylon never pledged to be faithful to God, the future city called "*Babylon the Great*" at some point will make such a commitment. Or rather, at some point prior to her crimes, Babylon the Great will have embraced the worship of the true God in earnest. However, by the time Roman power reawakens in the form of 7 rulers over 10 regions, Babylon the Great will act so contrary to her former genuine worship of God that her spiritual unfaithfulness extends to killing the true worshipers of Jesus, welcoming occult influences instead, and thus receiving from heaven's messenger the indictment, "*Mother of Harlots*." At some point, the city of Rome, that once proved her genuine faith in Jesus Christ by suffering long periods of persecution, abandons her true Lord, turns against his followers, and

indulges in the evil found in Revelation 18. Her fall from a genuine worship of God to a malevolent, murdering, corrupting prostitute is so great that at her destruction those in heaven shout “*Hallelujah*” over and over (Rev 19:1-6).

Does “the Harlot” Represent Apostasy, Great Wealth, or Both?

We are going to look again at how the metaphor of prostitution was used in the Old Testament. We need to know why this Gentile city will be called a harlot. Is it because of the city’s lavish wealth and power, or something else? The answer to this question will explain why the Antichrist destroys this city along with much of its riches.

As we have seen, the Old Testament uses the metaphor of prostitution in two different ways. One has the people of Israel acting like a harlot. The second has the nation of Israel seeking out a harlot. If the metaphor of prostitution in Revelation 17-18 is based on a previous biblical example, which of these two types is at work? The one where Israel is the harlot or where Israel is the harlot’s client?

To answer this question, we must first look more closely at one element present in both types of metaphors. Both of these types of harlot metaphors involve betrayal. While these two types of harlot metaphors use prostitution differently, both involve Israel betraying its relationship with God.

In both types of Old Testament harlot metaphors, Israel has a relationship with God that is violated. In the first type of harlot metaphor, Israel was guilty of seeking out a prostitute when it allows itself to be seduced by the wealth and materialism of the powerful Gentile cities of Tyre and Nineveh. Israel violated its special relationship to God by coupling with these two harlot cities. In the second type of metaphor, Israel herself is the harlot when she acts like a promiscuous woman by worshiping her neighbor’s gods. Israel was herself the harlot because she betrayed her intimate relationship with God. Whether Israel acts like a harlot or becomes the client of a Gentile harlot, in either case, Israel betrays God.

Who is Betrayed by the Great Harlot’s Activities?

At the heart of both types of metaphors is this idea of betrayal. To see which type of harlot metaphor is operating in Revelation 17-18, we need to look again at how the harlot is portrayed. In Revelation 17-18, we find the powerful Gentile city acting as a seducing prostitute. This would seem very much in line with the type of harlot metaphor used of Tyre (Isa 23:15-18) and Nineveh (Nah 3:4). Yet, if that is the only way the metaphor is used in Revelation 17-18, we still have a problem involving the very core idea found in both Old Testament metaphors. If the Gentile population and their rulers are enticed by the great Gentile city, who is being betrayed?

In both types of Old Testament harlot metaphors, betrayal was the central theme. Yet, if Gentile rulers are enticed by the wealth and power of a Gentile world capital city, who or what is being betrayed? This is not a little matter. It goes to the heart of how we must view the “woman” in Revelation 17 and it plays a large role in why this woman is purposely destroyed by the beast.

Gentile cities worshiped false gods and used their wealth and resulting power to influence other Gentile cities in the Old Testament. But only when the Gentile cities act this way with Israel are these cities called prostitutes. Why? The reason is because God is being betrayed. When Israel pulled away from God, either by yielding to the seductions of the harlot Gentile cities or by being the harlot herself and worshiping the Gentiles’ gods, she violated her relationship with God. When the Gentiles acted this way among themselves, bad as this behavior was, it did not violate any relationship with God because there was no prior relationship to betray.

If the Old Testament use of the harlot metaphors is to be a pattern for the harlot metaphor in Revelation 17, then there must be a betrayal, specifically the betrayal of a relationship with God. Yet, how is God betrayed when this wealthy Gentile city couples with Gentile rulers? Something critical to the biblical metaphor of prostitution is missing. The only way the use of the harlot in Revelation 17-18 can be consistent with the Old Testament harlot metaphors is if God is somehow betrayed.

Which Gentile Group Betrays God?

For God to be betrayed by the harlot's activities in Revelation 17, one of the parties joined together in the act of prostitution must have had some genuine relationship to God which they violated. Either the Gentile population, their rulers, or the great harlot herself must have had a prior relationship with God where faithfulness was expected and betrayed. While it may seem unlikely on the surface, it is the harlot herself, the great Gentile city, which once was in a genuine relationship with God based on a commitment to truth. It is this once intimate true relationship with God that is violated in the harlot metaphor as it is used in Revelation 17-18.

Only when we look closely at the element of betrayal do we see the most likely way to understand the metaphor of prostitution in Revelation 17-18. In the first type of Old Testament harlot metaphor, a Gentile city was the harlot using its wealth and power to seduce Israel away from God. In Revelation 17-18, we see another Gentile city of great wealth and power being called a harlot.

How is God Betrayed by the Great City's Actions?

We can see how this Gentile city acts like a prostitute, using its power and wealth to seduce just like the Gentile cities of Tyre and Nineveh did in the Old Testament. However, this does not explain just what this Gentile city is doing that betrays God.

The Gentile city will obviously entice the world's rulers and the ruled alike by means of her wealth, but there must be more. To betray God this Gentile city must be doing more than using her wealth improperly. God certainly will hold all people and institutions accountable. Yet, violating God's standards regarding wealth does not constitute betrayal. Seeing the harlot metaphor used in Revelation 17-18 as only like the first type of Old Testament harlot answers some questions, but leaves open the central question of how God is betrayed by this Gentile city.

This is where the second type of Old Testament harlot metaphor brings an answer. In this second type, God is betrayed when his people act like a harlot themselves. What happens if we assume both types of Old Testament metaphors are involved in Revelation 17-18? Under the second type of metaphor, the harlot will have had a genuine

relationship with the true God which it will reject.

This would explain how God will be betrayed by the great Gentile city in Revelation 17-18. This Gentile city will abandon its faith based relationship with the true God in favor of something else instead. The Mother of Harlots will remain religious, but will not remain spiritually committed to Jesus Christ. Instead, the Great Harlot, the Mother of Harlots will become so apostate that she will kill God's true followers (Rev 17:6, 18:24) and host demonic activity (Rev 18:2, 23).

Why should we see the metaphor of prostitution in Revelation 17-18 in this way? This type of metaphor is the most common one in the Old Testament, while the other type is used only twice, once of Tyre (Isa 23:15-18) and once of Nineveh (Nah 3:4). The metaphor of prostitution being a form of spiritual betrayal is also found in the beginning portion of Revelation, as we saw previously (Rev 1:12-16, 18-23). As we move forward we will also see that there are several New Testament prophecies that speak about the rise of religious apostasy in the future. We will find multiple lines of evidence coming from many different directions.

The Origin of Rome's Apostate Religious Entity

The task going forward is to see if the "*great harlot*" in Revelation 17 should really be seen as an apostate spiritual entity that once had a real and genuine relationship with God. We also want to see if there really is sufficient evidence to justify the claim that this great Gentile city will betray the living God.

The Hebrew term זָנָה means the violation of the formal bond of marriage or betrothal through sexual misconduct. It is used often as a metaphor by the Old Testament prophets for Israel's participation in the worship of other gods. The infrequent use of זָנָה - "harlot" in the Old Testament to describe cities without formal bonds with God stands seemingly in opposition to the frequent, near constant description of "*Babylon the Great*" as a πόρνη - "prostitute," or "harlot" in Revelation 17. Rome's future materialistic pride and idolatrous sorcery may be elevated far above those of Tyre and Nineveh. However, there is still a discrepancy when we contrast the fact that in

the Old Testament, Gentile cities like ancient Babylon could not commit spiritual prostitution while the Gentile city called "*Babylon the Great*" is also called "*the Mother of Harlots*."

This discrepancy is alleviated in Revelation 14-19 when we realize that the future city of Rome will have had a formal or covenant bond with the true God of which she is in repeated and gross violation. Ancient Babylon could not have had such a relationship with God. Just as Israel's apostasy was aptly described as prostitution in the Old Testament, so the repeated description of prostitution and harlotry of Babylon the Great will be the result of a covenant based relationship to God with an element of the city of Rome that will be grievously violated. If the rich Old Testament metaphor is to be carried forward and applied to Revelation's use of the term for harlot, then only those who experienced a genuine relationship with God can commit spiritual prostitution of this kind.

The Title - "Mother of Harlots" - Cannot Be Only a False Religion

While there is a good deal of evidence in Revelation 17 & 18 that the city of Rome will be apostate in the future, there seems to be little evidence for an element of false religion. Israel's neighboring nations in Canaan took part in pagan fertility cults and religious practices. Yet they are not called prostitutes or harlots in the Old Testament. Their behavior was denounced repeatedly. Their practices were an abomination to God. Yet they were not called prostitutes because of their false religions. Only twice in the Old Testament is a Gentile city called **נִנְוֶה** - Nineveh (Nah 3:4), and Tyre (Isa 23:16-18). [[52](#)] Assyria and Tyre are repeatedly denounced, but only on one occasion are these cities called a prostitute. Nineveh was the home city of the goddess Ishtar, yet in Nah 3:4 Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, is called a **נִזְנָה** - "harlot," not because of its false god. In the city of Tyre the god Ba'al was worshiped, but Tyre is called a **נִזְנָה** in Isa 23:16-18 because of its gross materialism and pride. Both cities acted like a harlot because they enticed Israel to betray God.

In the 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation, the city called "*Babylon the Great*" is condemned because sorcery and materialism will be found there. Terrible as these sins will be, there is more to this city's

identification with a prostitute. The woman associated with this city is not just accused of prostitution, she is called *"the Mother of Harlots."* Her crimes of witchcraft and greed will be especially vile because she once had a genuine relationship with God based on truth. Her persecution and murder of Christ's followers will be judged severely because she once was a follower of Christ herself. Thus, the Gentile city of Rome, which will have had a genuine relationship with God followed by terrible apostasy, is called *"the Mother of Harlots."*

The Ubiquitous Influence of this Woman

"Mother of Harlots" expresses the extent of future Rome's apostate condition. It goes much further than just comparing this city to a prostitute. *"Mother of Harlots"* suggests that this woman is the origin or mother of spiritual betrayal. Part of the metaphor includes the seductive ways this woman keeps the world's people from turning to their true God. This city offers herself to humanity as a spiritual substitute. Instead of finding security, provision, and love from the Creator, people will turn to the spiritual substitute in the great harlot.

... with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.

Revelation 17:2

For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.

Revelation 18:3

A Future Apostasy in Other New Testament Passages

There are other New Testament passages which speak to the presence of apostasy near the end-times. In his 2nd epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul addresses concerns regarding whether the Day of the Lord had already come.

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you

may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

Paul repeats this warning in his 1st epistle to Timothy.

But the Spirit explicitly says that in the later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

1 Timothy 4:1-3

Paul indicates that the Holy Spirit “explicitly says” that a falling away will come, and even provides some of the teachings of these apostates. In the 2nd epistle of Peter chapter 2, and in the epistle of Jude, the reader is warned about those who advocate error, both now and in the future.

If apostasy is “explicitly” said by the Holy Spirit to come in the later times, and if Paul also informs the believers in Thessalonica about an apostasy that precedes the coming of the Antichrist, then we should not find the metaphor of the “*great harlot*” difficult to define. The prophecy of a coming apostasy or “*falling away*” is consistent with the Old Testament use of a people once in relationship to the Lord who abandon that worship for something more to their liking. These passages confirm that an apostasy is to come in the later times. This apostate religious system will become so corrupt that Paul conveys the Holy Spirit’s message that it will be associating with demonic forces. This is also what is said by the angel in Revelation 18.

... paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

1 Timothy 4:1

And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is

Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit,

Revelation 18:2

Other Seductive Elements of Rome's Harlotry

There are additional aspects of the future apostate religious system. Many of the elements that distract humanity from the deep longings for the true God are also found in the city of the great harlot. Great wealth and beautiful objects such as the luxuries brought to her by traders, her interrelationships with the power of the revived Rome, rich experiences, raw wealth are all found in the great harlot. Through these, she not only seduces but retains the affection of those who do not look to their Creator. Thus, the great harlot contains not only the spiritual notions and rituals of an apostate religion but also the distractions to secure the lustful devotion of the masses from all over the world.

Summary of "the Mother of Harlots"

Israel's straying into the worship of false gods is portrayed repeatedly as Israel acting like a prostitute. This metaphor is found throughout the Old Testament prophets. As we look to the image of "*the great harlot*," "*the Mother of Harlots*," the metaphor from the Old Testament would seem to provide guidance. The metaphor of harlotry representing apostasy is confirmed by both its use in two church letters in Revelation chapter 2, and by the New Testament prophecies concerning the rise of apostasy in the end times. If the metaphors of spiritual prostitution that are found in the Old Testament are to be applied to the imagery of the great prostitute in Revelation, then the same conditions must be common to both.

The Hebrew term, whether used figuratively or actually, refers to sexual activity that violates a formal relationship such as marriage or a betrothal. This has revealing implications regarding the range of meaning for the "*great harlot*" in Revelation 14-19. Just as the metaphor of spiritual harlotry could only be used of those in the Old Testament who had a formal relationship with the Lord, so too, the title "*Mother of Harlots*," would seem to indicate that this entity in

Rome at one time will have had a relationship with the Lord, which she violates. That the great harlot represents an apostate entity centered in Rome and existing in close association with Rome's revived power is consistent with how the metaphors of spiritual prostitution are used in the Old Testament.

Is the Great Harlot the Roman Catholic Church?

Should we see a connection between the Roman Catholic Church and the Great Harlot of Revelation? There are some interpreters who say "yes," who make a direct connection between the Church of Rome and the harlot of Revelation 17-18. However, from our present vantage point, from our place in the unfolding of history, it is not at all appropriate to do so.

Let's reverse the situation for a moment. Should others feel ok condemning you today for crimes they believe you will commit in the future? As of right now you have committed no crime, but you are being condemned because others assume you will commit them. How could you defend yourself? You would be just as powerless to actually prove your innocence as your accusers would be to actually prove you guilty.

Some may counter that while the Great Harlot's judgement is future her crimes may not be. But, this still is an unproven assumption. Would it be ok for others to assume you were guilty of crimes? Should you be punished simply because others assumed but did not prove you guilty?

Now some may still ask, "What if it can be proven, through recognized venues of legal redress, that a currently existing entity did in fact commit the same violations seen in the prophecy, would it be wrong to desire the imposition of justice? Of course, it would not be wrong. But it still does not mean that the Church of Rome is the Great Harlot of the prophecy. It would only prove that they would be guilty of some of the same types of crimes.

I am not attempting to defend Rome. But looking into the future to afix blame today opens up to all kinds of mischief and abuse which could easily work in two directions. Not just one.

Now, while we cannot and should not make definite connections between any current institution and the Great Harlot of Revelation, it would not be at all wrong to have a heightened sense of wariness, to be more guarded. It would be less than prudent to not be suspicious on some level.

The prophecies in Revelation connect the city of Rome with a formerly true worship of Jesus Christ that will become hostile and lethal to his followers. Not knowing what may still happen between now and the time of Revelation 17 & 18 means that we have no way of knowing for certain how any current institution may behave, or even if it will still be in place in that future time.

Since there is much we do not know, it would also be wrong to assume that the coming period of general apostasy (2 Thes 2:3ff, 1 Tim 4:1ff, 2 Tim 3:1ff, 2 Pet 3:3ff, Jude 17ff) would affect some branches of Christianity more than others. Lest some grow haughty in thinking their Protestant side of the Christian tree would be spared, the prophecies of a coming apostasy offer no such assurances. The whole may prove equally susceptible to spiritual decay. Only when Revelation 17 & 18 become present realities can anyone know for certain.

"Babylon the Great"

Having already looked at the meaning of *"The Mother of Harlots"* we now turn to the first title used of the woman, *"Babylon the Great."* Are there further indications to aid us in understanding its significance? *"Babylon"* is not a reference to the actual capital of the ancient Babylonian Empire. The name is not *"Babylon,"* but *"Babylon the Great."*

The Use of "Babylon" in the New Testament

Babylon is mentioned 6 times in Revelation (14:8; 16:18; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). The first four uses employ the title *"Babylon the Great."* The 5th use of Babylon is coupled with the dual description of *"the great city," "the strong city."* The 6th use combines the descriptions into *"Babylon the great city."* Babylon is the great and strong city *"that is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth."* Each of the 6 uses of the name *"Babylon"* in Revelation is accompanied by the adjective

“great.”

A glimpse into the meaning of “*Babylon*” is found in the Apostle Peter’s use of the term. At the end of his 1st epistle, while sending greetings to his readers, Peter writes:

She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.

1 Peter 5:13

There is no evidence that Peter was ever in southwestern Mesopotamia. So, it is highly unlikely that Peter was in the actual city of Babylon when he wrote his 1st epistle. [53] What does Peter’s use of “*Babylon*” represent? [54] There are two things to observe. First, wherever Peter was, he was not in ancient Babylon. Second, Peter assumed his readers would know where he actually was. So, we see that Peter’s use of “*Babylon*” was a symbolic reference to another location, which would be known to his readers when he used that term.

Historical Similarities Between Ancient Babylon and Rome

The name of “*Babylon*” has many points of connection with “*Babylon the Great*” both historically and through literary allusions. There are many connections between the history of ancient Babylon and the past and future history of the city of Rome. “*Babylon*” seems to represent the Gentile power that abused God’s people. The world power of ancient Babylon conquered and deported the Israelites and destroyed their temple in 586 B.C. The world power emanating from Rome dominated Israel, and in 70 A.D. killed many in Israel, deported the surviving Israelites and destroyed the temple. The ancient Babylonian king required worship upon penalty of death (Daniel 3). Rome required this same worship for its emperors with persecutions and martyrdom for those who refused. It is not hard to see how Rome could be regarded as the continuation and culmination of what had begun in ancient Babylon. For these reasons and others, Rome is figuratively called “*Babylon the Great*” in Revelation 14-19.

The Judgments on “Babylon” & “Babylon the Great”

The descriptions of “*Babylon the Great*” in Revelation 14-18 contain many literary allusions to those original prophetic condemnations of ancient Babylon from the Old Testament. There are many metaphors and images that are shared. Thus, the description and condemnation of “*Babylon the Great*” is done in part by making use of both quotations and metaphors from the Old Testament passages where the judgment of ancient Babylon is prophesied. Only a few of the passages are provided as examples, and only part of each passage is quoted.

Isaiah 21

*Then the lookout called,
“O Lord, I stand continually by day on the watchtower,
And I am stationed every night at my guard post.
Now behold, here comes a troop of riders, horsemen in pairs.”
And one answered and said, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon;
And all the images of her gods are shattered on the ground.”*

Isaiah 21:8-9

Jeremiah 51

*Flee from the midst of Babylon,
And each of you save his life!
Do not be destroyed in her punishment,
For this is the Lord’s time of vengeance;
He is going to render recompense to her.
Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the Lord,
Intoxicating all the earth.
The nations have drunk of her wine;
Therefore the nations are going mad.
Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken;
Wail over her! ...
For her judgement has reached to heaven
And towers up to the very skies.*

Jeremiah 51:6-8a, 9b

In Revelation, we hear the resonance between “*Babylon the Great*” and the Old Testament prophetic message of judgment on ancient Babylon.

Revelation 14

And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her harlotry.

Revelation 14:8 [*]

Revelation 17

And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgement of the great harlot who sits upon the many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of harlotry, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her harlotry." ... And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of the abominations and of the unclean things of her harlotry,

Revelation 17:1-2, 4 [*]

Revelation 18

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality." And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."

Revelation 18:1-5

Isaiah 46-47

We also find similar images and themes between "*Babylon the Great*"

and Isaiah's words about the ancient city of Babylon. In this passage, before addressing Babylon directly the Lord asserts his divine qualities. This was probably to contrast them with the deities of Babylon that failed to protect the city when God allowed its overthrow.

*Listen to Me, O House of Jacob,
And all the remnant of the house of Israel, ...
Remember this, and be assured;
Recall it to mind, you transgressors.
Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no other like Me,
Declaring the end from the beginning
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, "My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure."*

Isaiah 46:3a, 8-10

*Come down and sit in the dust,
O virgin daughter of Babylon;
Sit on the ground without a throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans.
For you shall no longer be called tender and delicate.*

...

*Yet you have said, "I shall be a queen forever."
These things you did not consider,
Nor remember the outcome of them.
Now, then, hear this, you sensual one,
Who dwells securely,
Who says in your heart,
"I am, and there is no one besides me.
I shall not sit as a widow,
Nor shall I know loss of children."
But these two things shall come on you suddenly in one day:
Loss of children and widowhood.
They shall come on you in full measure
In spite of your many sorceries,
In spite of the great power of your spells.*

*And you felt secure in your wickedness and said,
"No one sees me."
Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you;
For you have said in your heart,
"I am, and there is no one besides me."
But evil will come on you
Which you will not know how to charm away;
And disaster will fall on you
For which you cannot atone,
And destruction about which you do not know
Will come on you suddenly.
Stand fast now in your spells
And in your many sorceries
With which you have labored from your youth;*

Isaiah 47:1, 7-12a

The Significance & Meaning of "Babylon" in Revelation

The collage and mosaic of the various Old Testament quotations and shared metaphors must ultimately be interpreted according to definite connections in the context of Revelation. The allusions to the Old Testament illustrate certain common features between ancient Babylon and "*Babylon the Great*." In their original context, they predicted Babylon's fall. However, as alluded to in Revelation they are not primarily predictive but illustrative. The vivid portrayals of wickedness and judgment upon ancient Babylon in the Old Testament provide the reader with literary clues suggesting the extent of wickedness and the severity of judgment in "*Babylon the Great*." The context of Revelation 14-19 narrows the various allusions from the Old Testament to actual activities and attitudes in a city metaphorically called "*Babylon the Great*."

Subtle refinements can be observed when the many allusions from Revelation are compared with the original material in the Old Testament. The allusions to the Old Testament texts emphasize the potency of various aspects of "*Babylon the Great*." Thus, the allusions to ancient Babylon from passages originally found in the Old Testament serve as literary examples of what will be found in "*Babylon*

the Great" and what will become of her.

The Significance of Babylon's Judgment in Isaiah 13 & 14

In addition to the historical and literary connections between ancient Babylon and "*Babylon the Great*," there is another connection. While the previous quotations and allusions are mostly illustrative, there is a tantalizing eschatological or future prophetic aspect in one Old Testament oracle against Babylon.

In Isaiah 13-14, the condemnation and judgment of ancient Babylon seems to provide a window through which God's final judgment on humanity's wickedness is seen. This judgment includes descriptions of celestial signs and terrestrial destruction that can be found in other Day of the Lord contexts (ex: Isa 2:12-22; 24:1-23). The "*oracle against Babylon*" in Isaiah 13-14 seems, therefore, to contain an eschatological nuance which is picked up and reflected in the destruction of "*Babylon the Great*" found in Revelation 14-19.

The "Oracle Against Babylon" - Isaiah 13

In Isaiah 13 & 14, there seems to be a connection between the destruction of Babylon, the Day of the Lord, and Israel's final rest. Isaiah 13 & 14 is entitled, "*the oracle concerning Babylon*" (13:1). Yet, in the middle of pronouncing judgment upon ancient Babylon for her mistreatment of God's people, the oracle widens to the "Day of the Lord." The judgment oracle against Babylon expands in vs. 6-13 to include circumstances and events prophesied elsewhere as occurring in the end-time judgment phase of the Day of the Lord. Verses 2-5 could also be seen as more expansive than God's judgment upon ancient Babylon.

Isaiah 13 - End of Sinners & Wickedness

*Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,
Cruel, with fury and burning anger,
To make the land a desolation;
And He will exterminate its sinners from it.*

...

Thus I will punish the world for its evil,

*And the wicked for their iniquity;
I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud,
And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.*

Isaiah 13:9, 11

Sinners, including the wicked, arrogant and ruthless will be removed in the judgment of the Day of the Lord.

Isaiah 13 - Heavenly Signs & Destruction on Earth

*For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not flash forth their light;
The sun will be dark when it rises,
And the moon will not shed its light.*

...

*Therefore I shall make the heavens tremble,
And the earth will be shaken from its place
At the fury of the Lord of host,
In the day of His burning anger.*

Isaiah 13:10, 13

The same terrible celestial events that are associated with the Day of the Lord in end-time prophecy are found in the middle of the “*oracle concerning Babylon*.” Then in 13:14 the scene of judgment narrows back down to ancient Babylon just as it broadened previously. The judgment of ancient Babylon provides a window through which the prophecy of the Day of the Lord can be viewed. In this passage, the judgment of Babylon takes on a prophetic flavor about the future.

The “Oracle Against Babylon” - Isaiah 14

The “*oracle concerning Babylon*” shifts its focus in the opening verses of chapter 14. In vs. 1-3 the Lord speaks of Israel being at rest in their land.

When the Lord will have compassion on Jacob, and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, ... And the peoples will take them along and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as an inheritance in the land of the Lord as male servants and female servants; and they will take their

captors captive, and will rule over their oppressors. And it will be in the day when the Lord gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved, ...

Isaiah 14:1a, 2-3

Isaiah 14 - Israel is Secure & Whole Earth at Rest

Following Israel's establishment and rest in "*the land of the Lord*," the taunt commences. When their troubles at the hands of their oppressor have ceased, then the Lord invites Israel to taunt the fallen ruler who troubled them. Not only is the power of Babylon's ruler broken, but the whole earth, like Israel, is at rest.

*The whole earth is at rest and is quiet;
They break forth into shouts of joy.*

Isaiah 14:7

Isaiah 14 - Babylon's Destruction

At the end of the taunt for the ruler of Babylon the Lord concludes his "*oracle concerning Babylon*,"

"And I will rise up against them," declares the Lord of hosts, "and will cut off from Babylon name and survivors, offspring and posterity," declares the Lord. ... "and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction," declares the Lord of hosts.

Isaiah 14:22, 23b

Summary of the "Oracle Against Babylon" - Isaiah 13 & 14

The flow of the "*oracle concerning Babylon*" involves the expansive judgment of the Day of the Lord (Isa 13:6-13) including descriptions of the same celestial events seen in Isaiah 24, Matthew 24, and Revelation 6 (Isa 13:10, 13). The expansive judgment of the Day of the Lord then becomes more restrictive again to that of ancient Babylon (Isa 13:14-22). Following the judgments of the Day of the Lord and of Babylon, Israel is at peace in the land of the Lord (Isa 14:1-3). This peace and quiet seems reminiscent of the peace at the end of Gentile domination when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke 21:24). It is at this point that peaceful Israel is invited to taunt the ruler of

Babylon (Isa 14:4).

The more expansive judgment and its resulting rest for the “*whole earth*” creates an eschatological emphasis within the “*oracle concerning Babylon*.” Sinners and the wicked are exterminated. Israel is placed back on “*the land of the Lord*” in peace and security. This was not the case following the overthrow of the ancient Babylonian power by the Medes and Persians. While a remnant returned to the land of their fathers, it was during trials and hardship.

Reviewing the Historical Parallels

There are numerous historical parallels between ancient Babylon and ancient and future Rome. Babylon was the Gentile power that abused Israel, God’s people. Ancient Babylon was the world power of its day. Rome was the world power of its day, and will be that world power in the end-times. Ancient Babylon conquered and deported the Israelites and destroyed their temple. Rome dominated Israel, and in 70 A.D. deported those in Israel and destroyed the temple. The king of ancient Babylon insisted upon worship as god (Daniel 3). Many of Rome’s emperors also demanded worship and the revived power that will flow through future Rome will produce a ruler who will violently insist upon worship.

What was true of ancient Babylon’s abusive treatment of God’s people can be seen in the history of ancient Rome and the prophecies of Rome’s revived form. It is no wonder, then, that the judgments spoken in Scripture about ancient Babylon would be alluded to or quoted from, in describing the activities and culpability of Rome both past and future. We can readily see why Rome is figuratively called “*Babylon the Great*” in Revelation 14:19.

Future Rome is Judged for Hosting an Apostate Religion

The continual description of the city as the “*harlot*” or the “*great harlot*,” even as the “*Mother of Harlots*” requires an entity that exhibited true faith but later becomes apostate in its motives and actions. This is consistent with the metaphor of spiritual harlotry seen in the Old Testament, with prophecies of the coming apostasy in the New Testament, and with the image of spiritual harlotry found in two

churches of Revelation 2. If the metaphor of continual infidelity in Revelation 17 is intended to carry a different emphasis, its use would seem dissonant to other uses and not readily obtainable. Since the more likely meaning of the metaphor would be the same as is found in nearly every figurative use in the Old Testament, then an apostate religious entity must be found in the city of Rome at and probably even before the period of its judgment.

When the angel informs John in Rev 17:18 that the harlot *"is the great city which is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth,"* we are to understand that the apostasy is rooted in that city. Rome will be the center of the apostate's religious influence. If Rome were removed, the head of that apostate religion would be cut off, dealing it a fatal blow. The authority exercised by the apostate religious system flows from Rome out to the world. The dogma and dictates of this system would seem then to be centralized in nature. Rome does not just symbolize the future apostate system, it is the apostate's center of power. The city of Rome will be judged for its toleration and even support of a system that will promote apostate practices and beliefs.

Rome is Judged for Persecuting God's Followers

The apostate religious system will not be the only element in Rome deserving judgment. *"Babylon the Great,"* the *"woman sitting upon a scarlet beast"* would seem to represent Rome and all that was and will be in it. This includes religious apostasy as well as the Gentile political power that flows through it. While the Harlot is the city of Rome, the judgment is upon all the corrupting influences of its apostasy and the religious violence that were sheltered there.

Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; Because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of his bond-servants upon her.

Revelation 19:1b-2

Also judged in the destruction of *"Babylon the Great"* are the crimes and atrocities of Roman power both past and future. This would seem

to be the implication of the many Old Testament allusions to "Babylon." Among the practices that brought judgment upon ancient Babylon was its abuse of power, especially in how that power mistreated God's people. Thus, the destruction of Rome is God's judgment upon Rome's past abuses, the abuses of the apostate religious system, and the abuses that arise out of the close relationship that the revived Roman confederation will maintain with that apostate system. The destruction of Babylon the Great, future Rome, will be part of God's judgment upon these Gentile powers that will rule contrary to his will from this city.

Rome Is Destroyed but Not the Revived Roman Empire

The power of the Roman Empire, whether past or in the revived form, is represented in Daniel and Revelation by the title "*beast*." As the structure of the revived Roman power changes, different individuals exercise that power, but the title "*beast*" remains affixed. In contrast to the centralized apostate religious system centered in Rome, the ruling authorities of the Roman confederation seem decentralized. The city of Rome may only serve as the seat of the supreme executive for the central governing apparatus of the Roman confederation. The office of supreme executive might be more of a coordinating and facilitating office than an office that wields great power. The real power of the Roman confederation will lie with the 10 regions.

But when the Antichrist begins his aggression, the power of the confederation mutates from its original form. When the power of the revived Roman Empire is conferred upon the Antichrist as the 8th ruler, there will be further changes in the structure of the empire's governing form. The Antichrist as the 8th ruler hates the city represented by the woman and destroys it.

Even though the city of Rome will no longer exist, the power of the empire will continue in the person of the Antichrist. The "*Beast*" continues even after the city that gave rise to that "*beast*," the city that served as the coordinating center for the Roman confederation, is destroyed. With that destruction, the last vestiges of the confederation form of Roman power will be swept away. The power of the "*beast*" continues, however, as the 8th ruler continues to exercise the empire's

power over the 10 regions.

The harlot is shown to be separate from the beast that she rides. The city of Rome is distinct from the power of the Roman confederation. The power of the revived Roman Empire is structured as a decentralized confederation of 10 regions, whose coordinating executive is located in the city of Rome. Rome does not dominate this revived form of the empire, but Rome's symbolism and traditions add legitimacy and authenticity to its rebirth. Rome's past abuses are added to those in its future awaiting God's judgment. Rome's hosting of the apostate worldwide religious system also makes the city ripe for judgment.

Rome is Not the Beast

Some might think that the wording of Rev 17:18 would require the harlot to represent both the city of Rome as well as the political power that will be dominating the earth. The English translations would tend to support this view.

*And the woman whom you saw is the great city,
which reigns over the kings of the earth.*

Revelation 17:18

However, the Greek has a different, subtler nuance.

ἡ πόλις	ἡ μεγάλη	ἡ ἔχουσα	βασίλειαν ἐπὶ	τῶν βασιλέων	τῆς γῆς
the city					
the great one					
the one which is having					
			a kingdom over		
			the kings of the earth		

We should note that the verse does not say “the great city which is the kingdom ...” Rather, the great city “is having a kingdom ...” The Greek words translated as “which is having” are ἡ ἔχουσα. The verb ἔχω generally carries the meaning of “to possess, to have.” [\[55 \]](#) Its use here conveys the thought of the city ‘containing the kingdom...’ The great city contains, or is hosting “a kingdom over the kings of the

earth." The city is not the kingdom, but the kingdom is governed to a limited extent from the city. Thus, Rev 17:18 does not see the city of Rome as the empire exercising authority over the 10 regions. The city of Rome serves as the center of the apostate religious system.

When Rome is destroyed, the judgment is against "*Babylon the Great*," the center of the ancient empire that persecuted and killed Christians and Jews, conquered the land of Israel and destroyed the temple in 70 A.D. When Rome is destroyed, the "*Mother of Harlots*," the head and center of the apostate religious system, is destroyed. When Rome is destroyed the administrative center of the revived empire is lost. With the loss of Rome, the last vestiges of the revived Roman power as a confederation are also gone. When the Antichrist is elevated to complete power as the 8th ruler, the confederation is lost but the power of the empire it spawned continues.

The Two Titles are Two Reasons for God's Judgment on Rome

The use of the various titles seems to emphasize different aspects of Rome that are being judged. The title "*Babylon the Great*" seems to refer to the city of Rome as the center or host of the Gentile empire in both its ancient and future forms. The title "*Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth*" seems to refer primarily to the city of Rome as an apostate form of a formerly genuine faithful worship of God. The crimes of the apostate religious entity are especially vile because the harlot, which once represented the grace of God, is guilty of desecrating her former testimony and is actively martyring those still faithful. The crimes for which Rome is judged are her abuses of governing authority and ecclesiastical apostasy found in it. These crimes originate in Rome and then fill the earth. It is for them that she is judged by God. [[56](#)]

How Can Rome Be Separate from the Future Roman Empire?

At first, this may seem confusing. If the harlot is the future city of Rome, and the harlot is not the beast, then it would seem to follow that future Rome is not the Roman power of the end-time but is somehow separate from it. This seems especially confusing because of the prophetic separation between the City of Rome and the future

Roman Empire. At first pass, this might seem incompatible.

We must also remember that the 8th ruler in Rev 17:11-16 hates and destroys the harlot. This 8th ruler is also called "*the beast*" and, therefore, must also represent the revived Roman Empire. Just because the Antichrist arises from within the revived empire of Rome does not require him to retain Rome as his capital. In fact, his hatred for this city moves him to destroy it. He is still called "*the beast*" after the city's destruction, so the continuity with the revived empire from Rome will remain intact. Recalling the interaction of the symbols for these future powerful entities may help us adjust our previous ideas in these difficult passages.

Additionally, the revived Roman Empire will be structured differently than its previous form. Its power seems to be initially centered in 10 regions rather than in one capital. When we become aware of the future Roman power in Daniel 7, it is composed of 10 regions or "*kingdoms*." This strongly suggests that its collective power is decentralized. Unlike the more centralized structure of the apostate religious system, the revived Roman Empire will have its decision-makers separated among its 10 regions. The city of Rome is not the base of the revived empire's power initially. Thus, a weaker relationship between Rome and the 10 regions would seem to be the simplest interpretation not contradicted by the prophetic representations observed so far.

When Roman power re-awakens from dormancy to dominate the world, its power will not be centralized in Rome. Instead, its 10 strong regions will be administered from Rome. This will continue until the end of the 7th supreme executive's time in office. Later, when the Antichrist assumes authority as the 8th ruler, he distances the new structure of the empire even further from the city of Rome and eventually destroys it.

The judgment upon "*Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth*" "*the great and strong city*" "*which is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth*" is a judgment upon the abusive and corrupting evil perpetrated by forces emanating from the city of Rome. Rome is judged for every evil act that was or will yet be

found in it. This judgment concerns these horrific atrocities in ancient Roman power, revived Roman power, and apostate Rome. It includes but does not seem limited to the wanton killing of innocents, gross materialism, the arrogance of power, and the pervasive promotion of apostate practices. This city has never been so judged. But when judgment does come, it brings praise from heaven.

After these things I heard, as it were, a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; Because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on Her." And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns."

Revelation 19:1-6

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ANTICHRIST'S CLAIMS AND THE ETERNAL MAJESTY OF GOD

From the time that he subdued three of the original 10 regions, and possibly even before, the Antichrist makes boastful claims about himself. These assertions continued during his struggle against the worldwide religious system allied with the 6 regions remaining outside his control. After the Antichrist's resurrection, his claims gain legitimacy among the population and embolden him further. When the Antichrist, as the former 6th ruler, returns to power as the 8th ruler, his claims are enforced as unquestioned law. He will claim that he is the long-awaited one who "the many" anticipate, that he is the first man to conquer death, and that his resurrection is proof of his claims to be God. Everyone must submit themselves to the Antichrist and worship him or they will be subject to death. However, the Antichrist's false claims have been anticipated and truth's counter arguments prepared long ago. Only Jesus is the Messiah, the Lamb of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, truly man and truly God, and, therefore, the only man ever worthy of worship.

The first three references revealing the Antichrist's death and new life are in Revelation 13. We examined them in Chapter Five. Their direct connection with the Antichrist's death and resurrection was confirmed from their context in Revelation 13 (internal evidence) and by comparisons with key verses outside the chapter (external evidence).

The second three references are found in Revelation 17 and also

contain internal and external confirmations that the Antichrist will die and be resurrected. We have already examined the internal evidence in Chapter Six. The external evidence will be examined in this final chapter. We will find that they take the form of contrasting the being, death, and life of the Antichrist as a man, with the being of the eternal creator God, who in the person of the Son of God lived, died willingly to secure humanity's salvation, and who now lives forever. We will also find additional details about the Antichrist's claims of divinity that are contrasted with the nature of the true God who cannot be confined by space or time.

The Antichrist's History of Blasphemy

Before the Antichrist was installed as the 8th supreme executive, before he was violently killed and resurrected from the dead, before he ruled as the 6th supreme executive, when he had subdued 3 other regions, the Antichrist began and continued to utter boastful, arrogant and blasphemous claims against God, the people of God, and those dwelling in heaven (Dan 7:8, 11, 20, 25; Rev 13:1, 5, 6; 17:3).

The word "blasphemy" is a transliteration, or 'English-ized' version of the Greek noun βλασφημία (blasfamia). When this Greek word is used of people it carries the meaning - "to revile, to slander, to defame, the use of abusive speech, to injure one's reputation." When such speech is used against God, it is a terrible sin. It is a blatant attempt to revile the character of the Omnipotent Holy Eternal God and is a rebellion against his rule. [57] The Antichrist's words will constitute nothing less than complete and open rebellion against the Eternal God. From the very first description that Scripture presents of the Antichrist as the other horn, his boastful arrogant words are shocking and continual.

In the first of three presentations concerning the other horn in Daniel 7, we are exposed to the boastful words of the Antichrist both immediately before and after a dazzling vision of the Eternal God in heaven.

While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, ... and behold, this horn possessed ... a

mouth uttering great boasts.

*I kept looking
Until thrones were set up,
And the Ancient of Days took His seat;
His vesture was like white snow,
And the hair of His head like pure wool.
His throne was ablaze with flames,
Its wheels were a burning fire
A river of fire flowing
And coming out from before Him;
Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,
And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him;
The court sat
And the books were opened.
Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words
which the horn was speaking.*

Daniel 7:8-11

In the middle of hearing the Antichrist's shocking words, Daniel's prophetic vision is interrupted to portray the majestic glory and splendor of the Eternal God on his throne in heaven. Then Daniel's attention is snapped back from this heavenly scene of the Eternal God to the sound of the boasting coming from the other horn. By exposing the boastfulness of the other horn immediately before and after the scene of God's splendor in heaven, we easily observe how pathetic all this boasting really is when the other horn is contrasted with the reality of the Eternal True God.

It seems clear that the purpose of the vision is to compare and contrast the reality of the "*Ancient of Days*," with the claims of this other horn. The angel who interprets these visions clarifies what the Antichrist's boasting was about when he tells Daniel, "*And he will speak out against the Most High God.*" (Dan 7:25).

The vision of the Apostle John in Revelation 13 seems to present a nearly identical picture with those of Daniel 7 regarding the claims made by the Antichrist.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and

blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

Revelation 13:5-6

In the three presentations of the Antichrist's activities as the other horn in Daniel 7, the blasphemy of this other horn is shown to begin no later than the time he subdues 3 of the 10 regions. In Rev 13:5-6, the Antichrist has already been killed and resurrected. By combining the observations from Daniel 7 and Rev 13:5-6, we learn that the blasphemous speech of the Antichrist begins no later than the time he subdues 3 regions and continues up to his death, it is renewed after his resurrection and does not stop even when he is given 42 months of governing authority.

It should be noted that the Antichrist's words may not seem blasphemous at the time to those on earth. The Apostle Paul reminded the believers in Thessalonica of what he had previously taught them. The claims of the Antichrist, the "*man of lawlessness*," "*the son of perdition*" (2 Thes 2:3), will seem reasonable to the masses because,

God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

The Antichrist Accepts Worship

The Antichrist's sins eventually go much further than even blasphemy. As we carefully examine the scriptural accounts, the claims of the Antichrist grow even more insidious after his resurrection.

And I saw one of his heads as if comparable to having been violently slain into death, and his wound unto death was healed. And the whole earth marveled after him, and they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"

Revelation 13:3-4 [*]

Following his resurrection, there are outbursts of spontaneous worship for the Antichrist himself. The astonishment and marveling over the Antichrist, who had continually reviled and defamed the True God, leads to the worship of the Antichrist as a god himself. The Antichrist does not seem to discourage this worship, but rather accepts them as legitimate and appropriate. The Antichrist's rebellion against God grows more bold. He has progressed from defaming God to receiving worship without complaint. The Antichrist will claim to be the Christ or "Anointed One," God in human form, denying that Jesus is Christ. He will claim that he is the long-awaited savior, using his resurrection as proof of his claims. Paul says that humanity will want to believe these claims because it is preferable to the truth. This tendency will be magnified in the days of the claims and false wonders of the Antichrist.

The one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

The Antichrist Insists Upon Worship

These claims of divinity move quickly from quiet acceptance to bold aggressive enforcement of worship. All are required to treat him as alone being worthy of worship.

And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Revelation 13:5-8

We should note the progression of events in these verses. After the Antichrist is resurrected, he accepts the spontaneous outbursts of worship. He resumes his continual denunciations of God. Then the Antichrist is given 42 months of authority to act. This 42 month period corresponds to his installation as the 8th supreme executive. That the Antichrist is killed and resurrected before he is installed as the 8th supreme executive is confirmed by the flow of events in Rev 13:1-10. Upon entering the supreme executive position for the 8th rotation, the Antichrist begins a campaign to kill all who follow after the Lamb of God - those who stubbornly believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that his death made salvation available to mankind, that he rose from the dead as the first fruit of the grave. Those who refuse to submit to the Antichrist as messiah are considered unbelievers and made enemies of the new religious order. As he uses the authority of his office to hunt down and make war upon the followers of Jesus Christ, it becomes clear that everyone's personal survival will be at stake should anyone refuse to worship the Antichrist, and only the Antichrist.

Thus, we can observe that the Antichrist's blasphemous language before his death and resurrection were not idle words. When he is given new life, the Antichrist uses the authority of his newly gained office to institute wholesale enforcement of worship exclusive to himself as Christ and God. All who refuse to submit will be faced with the possibility of execution. The penalty for not worshiping the Antichrist is seen in the false ministry of the False Prophet.

And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, ... and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

Revelation 13:12b, 15b-18

This False Prophet will promote and enforce the worship of the

Antichrist. The worship that was once the spontaneous response by some to the Antichrist's resurrection is now mandatory.

The exclusive worship of the Antichrist is enforced through access to commerce. When an individual pledges himself to worship the Antichrist, who is now the beast, that decision is sealed by a mark upon a visible part of the body. This mark will be either the name of the Antichrist, or the number which will be closely associated with him. Either or both of these marks are placed upon the forehead or right hand of everyone pledging to worship the Antichrist. A quick glance at someone's face or hand will reveal who has sworn allegiance to the Antichrist as ruler and God, and who has not. This 'tagging' of the Antichrist's followers makes it easier to identify and exclude those who are not. To ensure broad compliance, those who do not have the mark of the Antichrist are excluded from buying and selling. Those without the mark may be excluded from the banking system and other avenues of commerce, which could include all types of employment. As those who have not pledged allegiance to the Antichrist are marginalized, they become more exposed and thus more easily identified for execution.

It might seem foolish to anyone living in this time and experiencing these events to refuse to receive the Antichrist's mark, or refuse to worship him exclusively. No doubt many during this time will ask themselves, "Why not? I might as well get the mark and stay alive." We should also remember that the Antichrist will display power, signs, and false wonders that seem to authenticate his claim to be the Christ. Not preferring the truth, many people will be predisposed to believe him.

The one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false,

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11

So, will people in the future really be free to not believe the

Antichrist's false claims? Yes, multitudes will not believe, will not worship the Antichrist, and they will be punished for it. What about those who choose to worship the Antichrist and receive his mark, can they later choose to believe the truth and reject the Antichrist? This is not as clear. It may not be possible to recognize the falseness of the Antichrist's claims once people surrender themselves to him. Their choice to not "love" truth may put them on a path from which they can no longer escape. Once they are deceived, they may not be able to recognize truth.

By not desiring the truth, many people will become susceptible to the "deluding influence" and the Antichrist's "false wonders." Not loving or caring about truth will affect a person's eternal destiny. There is a terrible price to be paid by any who casually or rebelliously pledge their worship to anyone but the Omnipotent Eternal Creator.

If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he will also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

Revelation 14:9b-11

To go along with the rest of the world in receiving the mark of the Antichrist means personally identifying oneself with his claims, blasphemies, and defaming of God. It is agreeing that the Antichrist alone is worthy of worship, and sharing in the responsibility for the persecution and martyrdom of multitudes who refuse to submit to his demands. It is to support humanity's open rebellion against their Maker.

Those who refuse to worship the Antichrist may very well lose their lives. In this future time of worldwide rebellion against God, clinging to the truth will carry severe penalties. But for those who fear God's judgment more than the Antichrist's anger, Scripture goes on to say:

Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the

commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them."

Revelation 14:12-13

Indirect Indications about the Nature of the Antichrist's Claims

As observant readers of Revelation, we can learn much about the specific future claims of the Antichrist. Descriptions of the True God are presented in especially striking and evocative visions. These descriptions and strong statements are meant to be compared with the false claims of God's future antagonist. Through careful observation, we can detect the nature of the Antichrist's blasphemous claims. The Antichrist will seek to undermine certain key truths that the Lamb's followers in every generation have held as sacred. The affirmative statements about the eternal nature of God and of the effective acts of the Son of God in securing salvation are pre-positioned reinforcements of these truths which the Antichrist will seek to destroy.

After his resurrection, the Antichrist will claim to be the awaited one that so many have anticipated. He will specifically claim that, while a good man and possibly even a prophet in some sense, Jesus was never divine. Standing before the world in a transformed resurrected body, the Antichrist will claim that since Jesus was not divine, he did not rise from the dead and will certainly not be coming again. In contrast, the Antichrist claims all three of these distinctions to be true of himself, while declaring that he is God, perhaps with a different understanding of what being God means.

These blasphemous claims can be anticipated by examining which truths about the nature of God are stressed or emphasized with extra force in the book of Revelation. These truths will be the unchanging bulwark for the faithful in that time of great faithlessness, and a guide to which truths of the eternal God will be assailed in the Antichrist's efforts to supersede every notion of God in the hearts of humanity.

Literary Template for the Angel's Presentations in Revelation 17

The three presentations in Revelation 17 concerning the death and

resurrection of the Antichrist demonstrate great skill and eloquence. These three elegant literary presentations describe the interaction of two sets of events that will be intertwined in their future history. The personal set of events involves the death and resurrection of the Antichrist. The political set of events is concerned with the Antichrist's ascent to complete control over the world's political and religious bureaucracies. The structure of these three skillfully prepared literary presentations about the Antichrist is actually based upon three previous eloquent literary presentations that describe the true eternal God.

These three original literary presentations describing the true God are given in a format which the angel uses later in Revelation 17 to describe the Antichrist. The same basic template is used for the three presentations of both the true God and the Antichrist so that, as observant readers, we can more easily contrast the truths of God's divine essence with the false god's personal, political, and religious claims.

Revelation One

Our next step is to examine these three original presentations about the true God to discover the intended contrasts. The three original presentations cannot be separated from their literary contexts without losing much of their potency as vehicles of contrast. Consequently, we will examine these presentations along with the contexts in which they are intertwined.

The Basic Structure of Original Literary Templates

By now we recognize the format of the three skillfully crafted literary presentations of Rev 17:8 & 11 that describe the Antichrist:

*The Antichrist
was alive
is not now alive
will be alive again
and will go to destruction*

Another way of stating the motif of Revelation 17 is that:

*The Antichrist
was present in life
is now absent from life
will come again to life
and will ultimately be absent in destruction*

The angel's literary patterns in Rev 17:8a, 17:8c, and 17:11 contain slight but crucial differences from the original literary presentations in Revelation 1 & 4. Those original literary templates present the eternal essence of the true God with great clarity and power, yet with simple words and style. In choosing this original template as the model for his own literary presentations, the angel in Rev 17:8-11 seems to be mocking the bold assertions of a man, who does for a time conquer the first death, but whose ultimate destiny is the second death. [\[58 \]](#)

Revelation 1:4-8 - Overview to Salutation

In the first three verses of the book, we read that God gave the Revelation "*through His angel to His servant John.*" After impressing the divine origin of the things to follow firmly upon the reader, John begins the salutation (Rev 1:4 - 1:8). This salutation, or greeting, opens and closes with two of the three original literary templates whose format is adopted by the angel in Revelation 17. The verses in and around these original literary templates form an integral unit and, therefore, must be examined together.

*John, to the seven churches which are in Asia,
Grace to you and peace from
the one who is existing
and the one who was existing
and the one who is coming,*

Revelation 1:4 [*]

The Apostle identifies himself, his intended readers, and gives the traditional blessing or Christian greeting. This Christian greeting is presented as originating from all three persons of the Godhead.

"Grace to you and peace"
(Father) *"from the one who is and the one who was ..." (1:4)*
(Holy Spirit) *"From the seven Spirits which are before ..." (1:4)*
(Son) *"and from Jesus Christ the faithful ..." (1:5)*

The blessing from God the Father is presented first and is the first of three original literary templates adapted for Revelation 17.

*from the one who is existing
and the one who was existing
and the one who is coming*

Revelation 1:4 [*]

The blessing is also from the Holy Spirit of God and is presented second in order.

and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne

Revelation 1:4

The blessing is also from the Son of God and is presented third using a present time, past time, and future time format.

Revelation 1:5-8 - Components of the Son's Greeting

There is a noticeable present, past, and future time component to the description of the Son of God. Immediately following this present, past, and future presentation, we find the second original literary pattern in Rev 1:8b. The salutation from God the Son is more expansive than from either the Father or the Holy Spirit. First, are three truths about Christ which apply to the present time. Next, are three descriptions concerning Christ's past actions for which he is praised. Finally, there are four statements about the process of Christ's future coming. The blessing from the Son of God, therefore, contains ten truths to be contrasted with the claims of the Antichrist.

Revelation 1:5a - Present Truths of the Son

Three present truths about Christ are placed before the reader.

*And from Jesus Christ,
the faithful witness,*

*the firstborn out of the dead
and the ruler of the kings of the earth*

Revelation 1:5 [*]

As will be examined in detail later, each of these three present truths of Christ is the antithesis of the Antichrist and specifically address the false claims that the Antichrist will make.

The Second Original Literary Template

After this last portion of the salutation, we find the 2nd of 3 templates. In Rev 1:8, the Apostle presents us with this quote:

*"I Myself am the Alpha and the Omega,"
says the Lord God,
"the one who is existing,
and the one who was existing,
and the one who is coming,
the Almighty One."*

Revelation 1:8 [*]

The center portion of this verse is an exact word for word copy found in Rev 1:4b. In both verses, the order of time is the same: present, past, future. In these two original templates that begin and end this section and in the description of Christ's actions, the present is given first position, the past is given second position, and the future is given last position.

Our Encounter with Time

As we look closely at the three original templates (Rev 1:4, 1:8; 4:8), we will see more connections to the three literary templates used later (Rev 17:8a, 8c, 11). The original templates in Revelation 1 are about God, while the literary templates in Revelation 17 are about the Antichrist. These connections are not accidental.

The Antichrist will claim to be God, but the contrasts we see between these six templates reveal how unlike God the Antichrist will really be. Embedded within all six templates is the experience of time. God's unique, separate, and unrestricted relationship to time is to be contrasted with the way the Antichrist experiences time. Since the

experience of time is so central to these deliberately contrasted templates, we should spend some time reviewing how creatures like ourselves exist within it.

Our Encounter with Time: The Present

The present is the only dimension of time in which we can exercise our limited free will. It is the only dimension of time in which each of us are conscious. The present is the 'now' of our individual and collective existence. As such, it is the most important dimension of time to us. As each present moment slips into the past, it is replaced by a new present moment from the future. Even though we can only exert our will and are only conscious in that single moment of the present, we are nevertheless continually self-aware and able to continue making decisions because each present moment is followed immediately by another present moment. Each current present moment instantly becomes a past moment as it is replaced from the future. Of the three dimensions of time, as we know them, we can only be self-aware and involved in present time.

Our Encounter with Time: The Past

Of the two remaining dimensions of time, the past is known. The past is the chronicle of our individual and collective decisions and actions frozen in the unchangeable essence that is past time for us. We are only self-aware and able to exercise our will in that brief transitory state that exists between the future and the past. But we can recall and draw conclusions from the frozen past even though we are not able to change it nor are conscious in it.

Our Encounter with Time: The Future

The last dimension of time is both essential and alien to us. It is essential that the future exist, for every present moment in which we live and are self-aware is a moment from the future which is going toward the past. Yet it remains alien because we are neither self-aware in the future nor do we know what the future dimension means to us. We are not able to observe future moments, and even if we could, we would be just as unable to make changes in the future as we are unable to make changes in the past.

Summary of Our Experience of Time

We have been created to inhabit only the present dimension of time. Only in this transitory moment, where the future briefly becomes the present, and the previous present moment becomes the past, are we self-aware and able to exert our limited free will. To not exist in the present dimension is to not be self-aware in any dimension of existence currently known. The past is an available record of our previous decisions and actions. The past holds the record of heroic events, tender moments, pivotal decision, joyful occasions, as well as vivid recollections of injustices both great and small. The past is the record of how we have lived. The future is important to us, for without a future our existence would end. Yet the future is unknown to us. The future is both hopeful and fearful.

Thus, while we desire the future to exist as a storehouse of yet-to be present and ultimately past moments, it is foreign to us.

Our familiarity with each of these three dimensions of time is reflected in how we value them. We cling to the present, even though for all our clinging it moves to the past. We cherish the past for memories both tender and painful. We regard the future as necessary, but with hopeful anxiety because it is unknown to us.

Time Moves Past Us

While it is popularly understood that we move forward through time, it would probably be more helpful to understand time as moving by us. Time moves from the unknown future to that transitory moment of the present, in which we touch time and are thus self-aware and may affect events. Time continues to its final destination in the past. Time does not move past us individually. All earthly creatures with the ability to make choices exert their will in the same brief present moment. We are all self-aware and change our world in the very same transitory present moment. By this, we can conclude that time is moving past all of us, in the same direction, toward the same goal.

The Priority of Time in the 1st and 2nd Original Templates

Present, then past, then future. This is how we prioritize the three

dimensions of time. It should not be lost upon us that this same order is demonstrated three times in Rev 1:4 - 1:8.

Revelation 1:4b & 8b (author's translation)

ὁ ὢν	<i>"the one who is existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἦν	<i>"and the one who was existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος	<i>"and the one who is coming"</i>
ὁ ὢν	<i>"the one who is existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἦν	<i>"and the one who was existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος	<i>"and the one who is coming"</i>

These two original literary templates are identical. Each of the three lines contains a verb specifically chosen to convey a continuous existence. Unlike the Greek aorist tense, which is used to indicate a completed whole, all three verbals here are in tenses characteristic of continuous or ongoing action. In fact, the Greek verb used in lines 1 and 2 cannot appear in the aorist tense.

God's Relationship to Time in the 1st & 2nd Original Templates

The transcendence of God means that he is not confined to any part of his creation. [59] The eternity of God deals specifically with his unrestricted freedom concerning the dimensions of time. Time is an aspect of his creation. Scripture reveals God as completely free and unbound in the execution of his will (omnipotence). He is not dependent upon any aspect of his creation (transcendence), including time (eternity). His being exists beyond any demands time places upon us. Yet God is present with us in time, and no less present in any one moment than another. [60] Therefore, God inhabits all aspects of time and yet exists where there is no time. God infuses himself into all present, past, or future moments.

Being free from the bonds of time is the essence of his eternalness. God is not eternal merely because he continually exists, nor because he exists equally in all present, past, and future moments. God is

eternal because his being exists beyond all reach and restrictions. God's timelessness is the truest essence of his eternalness. [\[61 \]](#)

God's Eternity in the Lines of the 1st & 2nd Original Templates

As we encounter these first statements in Revelation that deal with God's relationship to time, we will find that they are both consistent with other revelations about God's eternalness, and reminiscent of the unique way those other revelations present God's eternity.

God's Relationship to Time Reflected in the 1st Lines

ὁ ὢν *"the one who is existing"*
Revelation 1:4b (author's translation)

ὁ ὢν *"the one who is existing"*
Revelation 1:8b (author's translation)

These first lines refer to God's existence in present time. The Greek verb used in the first lines is from the verb εἰμί - "to be." The construction of the verb in the first lines of the first two original templates is designed to convey a continuous existing in present time. [\[62 \]](#) God is continually existing in the present time dimension.

God's Relationship to Time Reflected in the 2nd Lines

καὶ ὁ ἦν *"and the one who was existing"*
Revelation 1:4b (author's translation)

καὶ ὁ ἦν *"and the one who was existing"*
Revelation 1:8b (author's translation)

The two second lines contain a verb specifically designed to convey a continuousness in past time. The Greek term used in the second line is the same basic verb εἰμί - "to be," but in a tense that indicates an ongoing type of action in the past. [\[63 \]](#) This second line specifically

says that God exists in past time.

This second line, as with all three lines in the original literary template, is used in the template in Revelation 17 to make direct comparisons and contrasts between the existence of the Antichrist and the being of the eternal God. Yet this second line also appears in its own immediate and local context which adds unique shading to its meaning. Here in Revelation 1 & 4, the context is the eternalness of the true God.

The lines that form the original literary template are reminiscent of the way God's eternalness was revealed in the Old Testament. God's unique relationship to time is one of the first attributes he revealed. This self-disclosure demonstrates how unlike any other being he truly is. So, while God did exist continually in the past, we should allow the force of the context, both local and broad, to inform our understanding of God's relationship to past time. God not only existed in the past, God continually exists or inhabits all past moments. [\[64 \]](#) This is true of God, but untrue of the Antichrist, because God is the creator and the Antichrist will only be a resurrected man.

God's Relationship to Time Reflected in the 3rd Lines

καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος *"and the one who is coming"*
Revelation 1:4b (author's translation)

καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος *"and the one who is coming"*
Revelation 1:8b (author's translation)

Both third lines contain verbals specifically intended to convey God's continuousness in future time. The Greek verbal used in the third line is from ἔρχομαι - to go, or come." [\[65 \]](#) God is *"the one who is coming."* Just as it is impossible for us to comprehend how God can continually exist in past time, so too we cannot really fathom how God exists in an ongoing way in the future. Humanity is bound to that fleeting moment at which the future intersects the past. In that briefest transition, we touch time and are alive, active, and aware.

This is the Creator's choice in how we experience the dimensions of time. This is not how God exists.

God's Relationship to Time is Hard to Understand

As creatures, we are so bound to our shared consciousness in the present moment that we strain in thought and language to imagine an existence not bound to the march of time. Yet, in the simplest of words, twice in Revelation 1 & 4 we encounter verbatim literary presentations, that from their words and the force of their contexts clearly, simply, and unmistakably communicate the eternity of the true God. The logical conclusion after experiencing these two verbatim expressions is that even though God continually exists in all three dimensions of time, eternity is not really about time at all. Eternity involves existence beyond the reach of the dimensions of time. It is this absence of time in the being of God that constitutes his eternity.

God's Eternity & the Antichrist's Experience of Time

The two original literary templates in Rev 1:4b and 1:8b seem to be deliberately contrasted with the literary presentations of Rev 17:8a and 17:8c. The Antichrist's supernatural resurrection from the dead will be the basis of his claim to be the divine long awaited one. In Rev 17:8a & 17:8c, the angel presents the resurrection of the Antichrist through a slightly modified use of the original template found in Rev 1:4b, 1:8b, and 4:8b, which describes the eternalness of the true God.

The angel's description of the Antichrist's resurrection in Revelation 17 is based on the form of the original templates in Revelation 1. In doing so, the angel deliberately contrasts the Antichrist with the One True God. Specifically, the Antichrist's relationship to time is contrasted with God's unlimited relationship to time. It might even be that the angel in Rev 17:8 & 11 is specifically mocking the Antichrist's claim to be God, in light of the unimaginable eternity of the true God.

The Original & Modified Templates: Time for God and Antichrist

*Grace to you and peace
from the one who is existing,
and the one who was existing,*

and the one who is coming,

Revelation 1:4b [*]

"I Myself am the Alpha and the Omega,"

says the Lord God,

"the one who is existing,

and the one who was existing,

and the one who is coming,

the Almighty One."

Revelation 1:8b [*]

the beast whom you saw

was existing,

and is not existing,

and is about to arise up out of the abyss,

and into destruction he goes.

Revelation 17:8a [*]

as they see the beast

that was existing,

and is not existing,

and will come.

Revelation 17:8c [*]

Present, Past, & Future for God and the Antichrist

In each line of these different literary presentations, there is a clashing contrast between the eternal God who continually exists and the blasphemous false god who experiences the three dimensions of time but only in a human way. The Eternal God continually exists in present, past, and future time dimensions. The Antichrist has a past, experiences the present, and will have a future. His experience of time, however, is still as a creature and not as the Creator.

The Antichrist has a collection of former present moments that constitute his past. Only God exists in all past time continuously, and exists beyond all reach of time. The beast is said to be absent in the specific present moment of Rev 17:8a & 17:8c. The eternal God always exists. Even the beast's future is described as what he will do in future moments of then present time. After the Antichrist is resurrected he

will once again continue to exist in present moments only.

The resurrection of the Antichrist does not change his status as a creature, even though he will be a resurrected creature. The Antichrist's claim to divinity because he rose from the dead is a false claim, since his future will end in the destruction of the second death. God, who continually exists in future time, is unaffected by time.

Rising from the dead even with an enhanced resurrection body does not change a creature into a god. The Antichrist was, is, and will always be a creature. The Creator is eternal. These are some of the stark contrasts that we are intended to consider as we observe the Antichrist described in a format modified from that original template used to explain God's eternal essence.

Revelation 1 - Jesus Christ in Present, Past, and Future Time

We are examining the external evidence that confirms our interpretation of Rev 17:8-11. The three templates that speak of the Antichrist's death and resurrection (Rev 17:8a, 8c, 11) are based on three original templates that are found at the beginning of Revelation. We have looked briefly at the first two (Rev 1:4 & 1:8). Before going on to look at the third original template (Rev 4:8), we are going to look at the verses between the first two templates (Rev 1:5-7) because they also involve God in present, past, and future time. They also show contrasts between the True God and the future false god, the Antichrist.

Beginning in Rev 1:5, Jesus Christ is spoken of first in present tense expressions, then Christ is praised by the Apostle because of his past actions. Finally, Christ's future second coming is described as the Apostle tells his readers about the process of Christ's physical return.

Revelation 1 - Jesus Christ in Present Time

In the dimension of present time Jesus Christ is:

*the faithful witness,
the first born out of the dead
and the ruler of the kings of the earth*

Revelation 1:5 [*]

Each of these three statements about Christ conveys two messages. First, these three truths about Jesus Christ are emphasized in this verse because of their present time reality. Second, these present truths of Jesus Christ are to be directly contrasted with the future lies and claims of the Antichrist.

Jesus is the Faithful Witness - Not the Antichrist

Jesus Christ is, and continues to be, the faithful witness about God the Father through both his words and works. The Antichrist's future words and works are to be contrasted with the words and works of the faithful witness.

Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me. And he who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me. ... He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word that I spoke is what will judge him at that last day. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

John 12:44-45, 48-50

From Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, we understand that submissiveness to God is the antithesis of the actions and attitudes of the Antichrist. The Antichrist will cause unprecedented bloodshed as he imposes his will upon the world. Jesus continually invites the willing to come to God through repentance and belief. The Antichrist forces worship upon the penalty of death.

Jesus is the First Born from the Grave - Not the Antichrist

and from Jesus Christ,

...

the first born out of the dead

Revelation 1:5 [*]

The second identifier used of Jesus Christ is that he is the first to enter back through death's door, and raised in a new body. As such, he is the

first one to be born out of the dead. That distinction is still Christ's and always will be. No one else can truthfully claim to be the first to conquer death.

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at this coming,

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.

Colossians 1:18

We have learned that the Antichrist will conquer death after dying from a violent wound. He will claim to be the first and only one to have conquered death, never to die again. To claim this distinction, the Antichrist must deny that anyone before him ever rose from the dead, including Jesus. The Antichrist will claim that Jesus Christ did die, but that he never left the tomb. The Antichrist cannot claim to be the supreme God in human form because he conquered death if another conquered death before him. In order to preserve and promote his own claim of exclusive divinity, the Antichrist will forcefully deny that anyone else successfully has broken free from the shackles of death. John wants his readers to know that Jesus Christ is the first to actually rise from the dead forever, so that no one might be deceived into worshiping anyone other than the Eternal True God.

Jesus is the Ruler of the Kings of the Earth - Not the Antichrist

and from Jesus Christ,

...

the ruler of the kings of the earth

Revelation 1:5 [*]

John makes this claim about Christ three times in the book of Revelation. The first has been observed already in 1:5. In Rev 17:14,

the angel prophesies the defeat of the Antichrist and the 10 rulers who are loyal to him.

These will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.

Revelation 17:14

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; ... And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written. "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Revelation 19:11, 16

Christ is already the ruler of the kings of the earth. He is the ruler of rulers now.

And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet,

Ephesians 1:19-22a

... so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet.

1 Corinthians 15:22b-25

Both Rev 17:14 and 19:16 refer to Christ as "Lord of lords, and King of kings" before the final battle against the Antichrist and his forces. Jesus Christ is now the ruler of the kings of the earth before he has overtly defeated them. It is not because Christ has thwarted his

enemies that he is the ruler of the kings of the earth. Christ is the ruler of all kings because he is God. That Christ is already reigning is stated in 1 Cor 15:25. Christ's ascension above all positions of power and authority following his conquering of death is demonstrated in Eph 1:19-22. Christ is the ruler of the kings of the earth both now and in all future times.

The Antichrist also rules over earthly kings, as Rev 17:12-13 demonstrates. Yet the temporary control of all earthly authority coupled with his false claims of divinity does not change the reality that Jesus is and will continue to be the true supreme ruler. The Apostle John chose to identify Jesus through his preeminence over all rule and authority on earth so that the seekers of truth might not embrace the Antichrist's false claims. The counterfeit can be better recognized when the genuine is encountered first.

Revelation 1 - Jesus Christ in Past Time

In the dimension of past time, Christ is considered worthy of glory and might by the Apostle.

*To Him who loves us
and released us from our sins by His blood
and made us a kingdom,
priests to God His Father,
to Him be glory and might forever and ever, Amen.*

Revelation 1:5b-6 [*]

Jesus Released Us from Sins - Not the Antichrist

Jesus' death was not pointless. It was not a mistake. Jesus did not die by crucifixion because he misjudged the political and religious forces gathering against his message. Jesus' death was part of God's plan to redeem mankind.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which he lavished upon us.

Ephesians 1:7-8a

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred

us to the kingdom of His Beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ... And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross, ... Yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

Colossians 1:13-14, 20, 22

Jesus Christ offered himself as the sacrificial Lamb of God, taking the sins of the world upon himself, and dying as that perfect sin offering to God. The death of the Antichrist will not accomplish the eternal salvation of humanity. Both Jesus Christ and the Antichrist die, but only in Christ's death is salvation accomplished. The Apostle John emphasizes the eternal significance of Christ's death in the beginning of Revelation. When we discover later that the Antichrist will also die, we are prompted to remember the great work Christ accomplished through his death, and consider that there is no lasting benefit to humanity from the Antichrist's death.

Jesus Made Us a Kingdom & Priests to God - Not the Antichrist

After releasing us from our sins, Christ accomplished more. Three times in the book of Revelation, redeemed mankind is said to be a kingdom and priests to God.

To Him who loves us

...

*and made us a kingdom,
priests to God His Father,*

Revelation 1:5b-6 [*]

The first reference has been observed in Rev 1:6. The second is in Rev 5:10.

Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou was slain, and did purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou has made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.

Revelation 5:9-10

These words of worship come from the four living creatures together with the 24 elders who encircle the throne, where the Lamb of God is found *“standing comparable to having been slain.”* Here is the first offering of praise in heaven for the Lamb.

The third reference is found at the end of the terrifying scene of judgment at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation. Through the Apostle’s vision, we are able to contrast the consequences from faithfully worshiping the Lamb of God with the consequences of worshiping the Antichrist and receiving his mark.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:4-6

The resurrection which is of true benefit is not what the Antichrist offers. The *“first resurrection”* (Rev 20:5) is secured through faith in Christ which requires the rejection of the beast and his mark despite possible martyrdom or persecution. By accepting earthly death rather than taking part in the Antichrist’s lies, the followers of the Lamb each rise from the dead and reign with Christ at his coming. The followers of the Lamb choose death from the Antichrist only to be resurrected by the Lamb.

Revelation 1 - Summation of Jesus Christ in Past Time

At the beginning of the book of Revelation, the Apostle John states the past actions of Jesus Christ and their resulting consequences for mankind. Christ’s death secured eternal benefits for humanity -

release from sin, transforming those who are forgiven into God's priests. In the heavenly scene of Rev 5:10, Christ is praised for accomplishing these very things.

Then, near the end of Revelation, John speaks again of Christ's accomplishment for humanity. In Rev 20:4-6, the Apostle directly contrasts the fate of those who worship the Antichrist with those who faithfully worship the true Christ. The consequences of following either of the two who rise from the dead are laid before the reader as a warning to those living at the time of the Antichrist's ascension and exercise of authority. Those who may be tempted to evade death or persecution by worshiping the Antichrist and receiving his image are warned that their fate will be other than they think. Those who are faithful to Jesus Christ will be priests to God and will reign in authority with Christ.

Revelation 1 - Jesus Christ in Future Time

The process of Christ's future return to earth is set before us.

*Behold He is coming with the clouds,
and every eye will see Him,
including those who pierced Him,
and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him
Yes! Amen.*

Revelation 1:7 [*]

It is interesting to observe that of all the future actions Scripture mentions concerning Jesus, the Apostle John chose to refer not just to his return to earth but to the process of his return. Among all the prophesied events that Christ will perform at his return, John chose to mention and thus emphasize the global witness to his coming.

The Apostle John specifically and deliberately chose to emphasize the worldwide witness of Christ's return to earth so that he could contrast the resurrected Antichrist as the political and religious "coming one." As the King of kings and Lord of lords approaches earth, so spectacular is his coming that every eye will gaze skyward. By this time everyone still living will have decided who they would follow. They will have chosen to worship either the Antichrist by receiving his

mark upon their bodies, or they will have steadfastly refused the Antichrist in favor of the Lamb. Only now, as the surviving population of the earth sees Jesus coming with the clouds, will the followers of the Antichrist realize their error and the followers of the Lamb receive release from the terror the Antichrist inflicted upon them. When Jesus comes to present himself as the long-awaited deliverer, everyone on earth will know that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Revelation 1 - Truths About God Contrasted with the Antichrist

In the last verse of John's gospel, the Apostle states, from his own eyewitness testimony, that the sum of noteworthy things which Jesus did is seemingly innumerable. From so vast a listing of Jesus' deeds, John chose this handful in Revelation 1 to describe Christ's present, past, and future. These few, chosen from so many, strongly suggest that the Apostle was seeking to emphasize certain essential eternal truths that would need divine reinforcement during the future onslaught and attack of the Antichrist.

When selecting the present, past, and future truths used to identify and describe Jesus Christ, the Apostle John specifically chose those that would also clearly contrast the eternal Son of God with the self-proclaimed divinity of the Antichrist, who, although risen from the dead, will be the first to experience the second death.

Revelation 1 - Summary of Truths from the Salutation

The greeting of "*Grace to you and peace*" is from God the Father, who is identified with the first original literary template proclaiming his eternalness. The greeting is also from the Holy Spirit of God. Lastly, the greeting to the seven churches is from Jesus Christ. In identifying and describing the Son of God, present, past, and future truths concerning him are placed before us. Each truth in present, past, and future time is a deliberate contrast to the seemingly dazzling but false claims of a would-be-god.

Truths from the Salutation Contrasted with the Antichrist

The Antichrist will claim to bring new truth to humanity's mounting troubles, yet Jesus Christ is "*the faithful witness.*" The Antichrist will

claim to be God because he alone conquers death. The basis for the Antichrist's divine claims is that his resurrection from the dead is unique. Yet the Apostle John places before his readers the long-taught truth that Jesus Christ is the first-born from the dead, the first to break death's hold.

The Antichrist will grant authority to those loyal to his tyranny. These kings will be subject to his rule. The Apostle anticipating this future treachery declares that Jesus Christ is the true Ruler of the kings of the earth. The Antichrist will claim that his resurrection from the dead inaugurates a new era in self-fulfillment. Through the Antichrist, humanity will be told it can achieve a level of existence that seems wonderful and glorious. Yet John addressed how Jesus Christ provided for the true need of all people through his death and coming to life.

Humanity's real need is not happiness or self-realization, but peace with the Creator whom we have offended. Christ's death as the payment for sin is our real need. Without a solution to sin, God's justice cannot be avoided. We need God's grace because we cannot endure his justice. The Antichrist may claim that those who worship him and receive his mark will be a special people who will join with him to become more than they currently are. The Apostle John says that the followers and worshipers of the Lamb will one day be priests to God and will reign with Christ.

The Antichrist will present himself alive after having been violently slain into death. His coming to religious and political power will be with the initial approval of the masses. While it may also be accompanied with signs and supernatural occurrences, it cannot begin to compare with the celestial event of the coming of Jesus Christ back to earth. John says that every eye will be looking skyward to observe the coming of the King of kings.

Even though the Antichrist will have exercised authority over every tribe of the earth, these same tribes will express mourning over Christ at his coming. That Jesus Christ is that long awaited One whose return the faithful have been anticipating for millennia will be inescapable to all who have survived the trials on earth and see him coming in glory.

These present, past, and future truths are the pre-positioning of

eternal unchangeable realities about Jesus Christ which are intended to counter the lies of the false god, whom the world will still worship to its own eternal destruction.

Revelation 1- Summary of Truths from Original Templates

The greetings to the seven churches by God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, and God the Son are not the whole contrast in Revelation 1 between God and the Antichrist. Within these greetings, the Father is shown to be the eternal One by use of that original literary template which will be used in modified form to mock the Antichrist's claim to be God.

Also within these greetings is the three part presentation of the true Son of God, in which each identifying statement counters a future false claim by the Antichrist. After the greeting of the seven churches by the Father, Holy Spirit, and Son is concluded, the second presentation of that original literary template dealing with the eternalness of God is placed before the reader.

*"I Myself am the Alpha and the Omega,"
says the Lord God,
"the one who is existing
and the one who was existing
and the one who is coming
the Almighty One."*

Revelation 1:8 [*]

The second literary template concerning the eternalness of God is found in a quote from God himself. The use of this template reminds us of the way God revealed himself in the Old Testament (Exod 3:13-15). These early self-disclosures demonstrated God's uniqueness. By stressing his timelessness, God effectively began to reveal himself as the altogether different One. These early revelations of God's timelessness are accomplished using words and phrases we should find familiar. The literary templates contain phrasing and words that resonate with these early descriptions of God's eternity. The literary templates should remind us not only of the original self-disclosures of God's timelessness, but also of the contexts in which they are found.

In the literary templates, once again the being of God is seen to be continually existing in present time, past time, and future time. The being of God transcends time. Whether the present moment, the past, or the future, all are not only open before him but inhabited by him. By stating that he continually exists in all three dimensions of time, God is also saying that he is timeless. This timelessness in the being of God comes closest to a true expression of God's eternalness as can be communicated with our time oriented and time restricted language. The Antichrist, who would have himself regarded as God, is not eternal, and is not, therefore, superior nor equal to the eternal God. The eternal God is an uncreated being who inhabits every aspect of his creation, yet exists beyond it. God is infinite and eternal, yet exists within every finite dimension and each moment of time.

Summary of Humanity's Relationship to Time

Of the three known dimensions of time, we naturally possess the greatest affection for the present in which we live, decide and can act. Of the remaining two dimensions, we feel more affinity for the past than the future. We know the past as the frozen unchangeable chronicle of already determined actions and decisions. The future is unknown and, therefore, both hopeful and foreboding.

Our relative evaluation of the present, past, and future is reflected three times in Rev 1:4-8. Twice in the verbatim original literary form of Rev 1:4b and Rev 1:8b, the eternalness of God is expressed in the present, past, and future respectively. The verses between these two identical uses (Rev 1:4-7) depict Christ's present realities, past victories, and future return and also confirm the same respective priorities of time by mankind.

Revelation 1 - John's Commission as a Prophet

We have just looked at the biblical material between the first and second original literary templates. This allowed us to see deliberate contrasts between the Son of God and the future false god. We are now going to look at some of the verses that come between the second and third literary templates. Here, too, we will see more about the Son of God and how he is contrasted with the Antichrist.

After the eternalness of God is restated in the second original template (Rev 1:8), the Apostle next records his commission as a prophet. The specific instructions given to John were received in a vision while he was exiled to the Greek island of Patmos. In this vision, John saw the resurrected Christ in his glory and heard Christ speak to him at the beginning and end of the vision.

And I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches ..."

Revelation 1:10b-11 [*]

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades. Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things."

Revelation 1:17-19

John's commission was to write a book in which he would describe *"the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which are about to happen after these things."* He was then to send this book to the seven churches listed in 1:11.

The One Who Commissions John is the First and the Last

The One who commissions John is Jesus the Christ, who is *"the first and the last."* This statement strains to communicate the completeness of God. The eternalness of God, the preeminence of God, the perfection of God and more, are bound together and simply stated. Nothing is lacking in the being of God. No imposter can claim divinity for himself without ultimately feeling the derision and wrath of the Faithful and Holy One.

The One Who Commissions John is the Living One Who was Dead

Christ also identifies himself as *"the Living One and I was dead, and Behold I am alive forever and ever."* During the future time of which the Apostle is to prophesy, the Antichrist will deny that any before him conquered death to live again in a resurrected body. Yet Jesus Christ

states that he is alive never to die again, though he once was dead. We should also notice that the order of the time perspectives is the same as seen in Rev 1:4-8. Christ is the living One now in the present, was dead in the past, and will remain alive in all future present moments.

The One Who Commissions John Holds the Keys of Death

Christ also identifies himself as the holder of the keys of death and of Hades. Hades is the abode of the departed dead (cf. Rom 10:7). Christ's point is that he controls the passage from life to death, and even from death back to life. He wants everyone to understand, no matter what a later imposter may say, that he himself alone controls that passage through death and the abiding place of those who are dead. Even though the Antichrist will be resurrected from the dead, it will only come about because Christ permits it to suit his own purposes.

The Appearance of the One Who Commissions John

Christ speaks to John twice during his commissioning. John records Jesus speaking at the beginning and at the end of this commissioning encounter. Between them, John records the appearance of the resurrected Jesus who was speaking to him.

And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands: and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him I fell at His feet as a dead man.

Revelation 1:12-17a

The One speaking to John is described by presenting 10 aspects of his appearance. By presenting Christ in the shining radiance of his glory, the Apostle is emphasizing that Jesus is not only alive in the present,

but that Christ is alive *as the resplendent God* in the present. Jesus Christ is alive because he rose from the dead as its first born, and Christ is God existing in blinding glory because he always was, is, and will be God. One of the Antichrist's lies will be that Jesus is not God. To counter this future lie of the Antichrist, Christ appears to his Apostle in his glory.

The Contents of John's Commission

John's actual commission is stated simply by Christ. The Apostle John is to write about what he has observed in the past, about "*the things that are*" in the present, and about the things that happen later in the future. Before the Apostle's commission, the order of the three dimensions of time had been consistently first the present, then the past, then the future. Now, however, the order in which John is to record the events has been altered to first the past, then the present, and finally the future.

The Past and Present Things

Identifying which revelations were about John's past and present may not be as simple as it seems. Just because the Apostle chose to tell us about his commission in the first chapter does not necessarily mean it happened before John witnessed some or all of the visions in the following chapters. John may have chosen to tell us about his divine commission at the beginning of the book to address his authority to write about such things and to reinforce the divine origin of the visions.

Finding the Beginning of the Future Things

There are, however, two clues in the beginning of chapter 4 that help identify the future things John is to include in his book. At the conclusion of Christ's final words, during his appearance in glory, he begins to dictate messages to the seven churches in Asia minor. In the very next verse following the conclusion of Christ's message to the seventh church, the Apostle John says,

After these things I looked, and behold, a door having been opened in heaven, and I heard the first voice as a trumpet

speaking with me saying, "Come up here and I will show to you the things which must happen after these things."

Revelation 4:1 [*]

The future things John was commissioned to also write about are to be shown to him. Several literary clues tell us that the things John writes about from Rev 4:1 to the end of the book fall under his commission to write down *"the things which are about to happen after these things."*

The 1st Literary Clue to Beginning of Future Things

The first clue provides continuity for the reader. John states that on the first day of the week while he was exiled on the island of Patmos, he heard a voice from behind him. It was *"a loud voice as a trumpet"* (Rev 1:10). Then later in Rev 4:1 John says, *"I heard the first voice which was as a trumpet speaking with me."* The same resurrected living Christ who spoke to John at his commission, is the same resurrected Christ who now calls John to heaven to observe the future things which John is to write about. The same voice, which spoke to the Apostle just prior to the dictation of the letters to the seven churches, speaks to him again as soon as the dictation of these seven letters is complete.

The 2nd Literary Clue to Beginning of Future Things

The second clue is found in the exact wording of John's commission. In Rev 1:19, at the place where John is commissioned to write about future events, there are four Greek words with an intervening verb. The very same Greek words are also found later in Rev 4:1, in the same order, with an intervening verb in the same location.

ἃ μέλλει γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα
the things which are about to happen after these things
Revelation 1:19

ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα
the things which must happen after these things
Revelation 4:1

We can see that the two Greek phrases are identical except μέλλει “is about to” in Rev 1:19 is replaced by δεῖ - “is necessary” in Rev 4:1. These two Greek verbs occur at the same place in both phrases.

Four of the five Greek words are identical in these two phrases. The one Greek word which is not identical is located in the same place in both phrases. The two Greek words which are different are both verbs of the kind that usually precede infinitives. It seems reasonable to conclude that these two phrases are referring to the same things. These two phrases are both referring to the future things which the Apostle John is commissioned to write down.

Summary of the Future Things in John's Commission

The same voice that was like a trumpet told the Apostle to write to the seven churches in Rev 1:11 & 19 and called John up to heaven in Rev 4:1. The things which the Apostle will be shown beginning in Rev 4:1 are the future things the Apostle was commissioned to write down. These two literary clues allow us to recognize that Rev 4:1 is the beginning of the portion of John's writings that pertain to future events.

The Third Original Literary Template is The First Future Event

Immediately after being caught up to heaven through the open door, the Apostle sees a throne with someone sitting on it. After describing the appearance of the One on the throne, John describes 24 elders sitting upon 24 thrones which surround the first throne, the seven burning lamps, the appearance of the area around the first throne, and the four living creatures. Then in Rev 4:8 he describes the continuous flow of words coming from the four living creatures.

*And the four living creatures, ...
day and night they do not cease to say,
“Holy Holy Holy
Lord God the Almighty,
the one who was existing
and the one who is existing
and the one who is coming.”*

Revelation 4:8 [*]

The Third Original Template Emphasizes the Eternalness of God

Here is the third and final presentation of the original literary template and it is also emphasizing the eternalness of God. That this continuous utterance from the four living creatures is speaking to the eternalness of God is confirmed twice by the following verses.

*And when they give glory and honor and thanks
to the one who sits on the throne,
to the one who lives forever and ever,
the twenty-four elders
will fall down before the one who sits on the throne,
and will worship the one who lives forever and ever,
and will cast their crowns before the throne*

Revelation 4:9-10 [*]

All three original literary templates are intended to convey the eternalness of God.

There is a Change in the Order of Time

Rev 1:4b, 1:8b, and 4:8b are all identical in their construction except that the last one changes the order of the time perspectives. In Rev 1:4b and 1:8b the order was the present, past, future. In Rev 4:8b however, the order is past, present, and future. Perhaps the order was changed in this third presentation to align with the order of the times first observed in John's commission in Rev 1:19. The change in the order of the dimensions of time in Rev 4:8b may also be connected to the Apostle living in his present moment but being shown aspects of future moments.

This Last Original Template is Preferred in Revelation 17

There are two sets of templates and there are three templates in each set. The subject of the first set is God and the subject of the second is the Antichrist. The first three templates are found in Rev 1:4, 1:8, and 4:8, and clearly emphasize the eternalness of the true God. The second three templates are found in Rev 17:8a, 17:8c, and 17:11 and are used to explain the convergence of the Antichrist's political rise,

fall and rise again with his life, death, and re-gaining of life. Of the three nearly identical original literary templates conveying the eternalness of God, this last template in Rev 4:8b is the angel's preferred pattern for his three skillfully prepared literary presentations about the resurrection of the Antichrist.

Two Sets of Literary Templates Contrast the Antichrist with God

The Antichrist will claim that his resurrection from the dead is proof of his divinity. In Revelation 17, the angel seems to be ridiculing this claim when he presents this event using the template from Revelation 1 & 4 that shows the uniqueness of the uncreated, eternal, holy, and omnipotent God. The similarities between the two sets of literary patterns (Rev 1:4b, 1:8b, 4:8b and Rev 17:8a, 17:8c, 17:11) prompts us to consider the competing claims contained in both sets. The differences between the two sets distinguish the two subjects of these presentations and aid in making reasonable conclusions based on the deliberately contrasted individuals.

The similarity in the six patterns prompts us to recognize that the first set of literary patterns in Revelation 1 & 4 speak of how the true God exists beyond the limits of time because he is the maker of time. The second three uses of the literary pattern in Rev 17:8 & 11 speak about a man who conquers death and claims divine prerogatives. The Maker and Sustainer of all things, who is perfect in his holiness, is thus contrasted with a man who by conquering death gains political and religious control on earth for a limited time by appointing himself as God.

The 6 Elegant Literary Patterns

The three original literary templates:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| ὁ ὢν | - <i>Grace to you and peace from</i> |
| καὶ ὁ ἦν | - <i>the one who is existing</i> |
| καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος | - <i>and the one who was existing</i> |
| | - <i>and the one who is coming</i> |

Revelation 1:4b (author's translation)

	<i>"I Myself am the Alpha and the Omega,"</i>
	<i>"says the Lord God,"</i>
ὁ ὢν	<i>"the one who is existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἦν	<i>"and the one who was existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος	<i>"and the one who is coming"</i>
	<i>"the Almighty One."</i>

Revelation 1:8 (author's translation)

	<i>"And the four living creatures, . . ."</i>
	<i>"Day and night they do not cease to say,"</i>
	<i>"Holy Holy Holy"</i>
	<i>"Lord God the Almighty,"</i>
ὁ ἦν	<i>"the one who was existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ὢν	<i>"and the one who is existing"</i>
καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος	<i>"and the one who is coming."</i>

Revelation 4:8b (author's translation)

The angel's modified use of the original literary templates:

	<i>"The beast that you saw"</i>
ἦν	<i>"was"</i>
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν	<i>"and is not,"</i>
καὶ μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν	<i>"and is about to come up"</i>
ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου	<i>"out of the abyss,"</i>
καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει	<i>"and into destruction he goes."</i>

Revelation 17:8a (author's translation)

	<i>"As they see that beast that"</i>
ἦν	<i>"was"</i>
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν	<i>"and is not,"</i>
καὶ παρέσται	<i>"and will come."</i>

Revelation 17:8c (author's translation)

ἦν	"And the beast which"
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν	"was"
καὶ αὐτὸς ὀγδοὸς ἔστιν	"and is not,"
καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἔστιν	"himself also is an eighth"
καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει	"and is out of the seven,"
	"and into destruction he goes."

Revelation 17:11 (author's translation)

Comparing these two sets makes a considerable impression. We recognize the great difficulty in attempting to adequately capture the full impact of the holiness and eternalness of the true God in human language. We are impressed by the comparison of the true God with the would-be god whose supernatural personal defeat of death provides him limited time to rule as he strains unsuccessfully to be God.

Differences Within & Between Each Set of Templates

There are two different effects resulting from the differences within these six literary presentations. Among the three original literary templates (Revelation 1&4), the slight differences expand our appreciation by addressing additional aspects of God's being. These differences, being unique to only the first three original uses of the literary template, also bind all three together into a threefold yet unified presentation of God. In the same way, the differences within the second three skillfully prepared literary presentations (Revelation 17) are bound into a threefold yet unified description of the Antichrist, while also providing us with a broader perspective on the colliding of personal and political events in his rise to power.

While the differences within the six literary presentations serve to more closely associate each of the three with its two counterparts, these differences also accentuate the dissimilarities between the two sets more clearly. The differences between these six presentations are small enough so that the unifying characteristics are not obscured. Yet these small differences are of extreme value in that they both draw the three presentations in each set closer together, while also widening the gulf between the two sets themselves.

Comparisons Within the 3 Patterns of the 1st Set

The slight differences in how the first three literary templates present the true God allow us to grasp a more comprehensive portrayal of the True God to which the Antichrist is to be contrasted.

Grace to you and peace

Revelation 1:4b

*"I am the Alpha and the Omega,"
says the Lord God, ... the Almighty"*

Revelation 1:8b

*Holy Holy Holy
is the Lord God,
the Almighty One*

Revelation 4:8b

Each of the first three literary presentations uses identical language to explain the eternalness of God. The differences between these three presentations occur in how the true God is introduced as the subject of each presentation.

God is Holy

In the last original literary template, God is continually worshiped by the four living creatures who carry his throne as they proclaim "*Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God*" (Rev 4:8b). It would seem inconsistent for this proclamation to only be a continual declaration of the eternal God's sinlessness. While sinlessness must, no doubt, be a part of the four living creatures' intended meaning, there is a larger message.

The inhabitants of heaven who hear this continual cry of "*Holy Holy Holy*" are themselves sinless. The four living creatures are sinless by nature, as they did not fall into sin. The 24 elders and redeemed of mankind in heaven are sinless due to Christ's righteousness fully applied to them. It would seem, therefore, somewhat incomplete to regard the cry of the four living creatures to be only a continual declaration of the sinlessness and moral perfection of God before the sinless hosts of heaven.

When the cry of the four living creatures is considered in the context

of the threefold declaration of the eternalness of God, the view of only moral purity in the words of “*Holy Holy Holy*” begins to seem even less consistent. The words themselves together with the context and the speakers seem to lead to a different emphasis of this continual cry.

God is Rarely Called Holy in the New Testament

It may be surprising, but unlike the Old Testament, God is called holy only on rare occasions in the New Testament. [[66](#)] That fact makes the threefold use of “*Holy Holy Holy*” in Rev 4:8 significant. Indeed, the whole scene in Rev 4:8 is reminiscent of the Old Testament threefold cry of “*Holy Holy Holy*” by heavenly creatures in the commissioning of Isaiah in Isa 6:3 (cf. Ezek 1:4 ff).

In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said,

*“Holy, Holy, Holy,
is the Lord of hosts,
The whole earth
is full of His glory.”
Isaiah 6:1-3*

“Holy” Describes God's Uniqueness & Separateness

The scenes of power, majesty, and awe recognized in the commissioning of Ezekiel (Ezek 1) and Isaiah (Isa 6) are seen again here in Rev 4:8. The threefold cry of “*Holy Holy Holy*” is a description of God himself. No created being could rightly be designated this way by such lofty creatures.

The Hebrew Term for “Holy”

The word used in Isa 6:3 for “*Holy*” is the Hebrew word קדוש.

The Hebrew word for “to be holy,” qadash is derived from the root qad, which means to cut or separate. It is one of the most prominent religious words of the Old Testament

*and is applied primarily to God. The same idea is conveyed by the New Testament words *hagiazō* and *hagios*. From this, it already appears that it is not correct to think of holiness primarily as a moral or religious quality, as is generally done. Its fundamental idea is that of a position or relationship existing between God and some person or thing. ... In its original sense it denotes that He is absolutely distinct from all His creatures, and is exalted above them in infinite majesty. So understood, the holiness of God is one of His transcendental attributes, and is sometimes spoken of His central or supreme perfection. [[67](#)]*

God is Omnipotent (All Powerful) and Therefore Unique

The four living creatures also specifically attach their cry of Holiness to “*the Lord God, the Almighty One*.” We, therefore, can observe a second attribute of God in their declaration. It is “*the Lord God, the Omnipotent*” or “*Almighty One*.” The four living creatures who support the throne continually cry out to the hosts of heaven that the One seated upon it is unique from all created things in his perfect holiness, and unique in his omnipotence.

God is the Alpha & Omega, First & Last, Beginning & the End

The description of the true God includes the continuous declarations that God is matchless in his transcendent holiness and the only being of infinite ability and power. In Rev 1:8b “*the Lord God*” declares himself to be “*the Alpha and the Omega*.” There is a variant or possible reading in Rev 1:8b in the original Greek where God also describes himself as “*the Beginning and the End*.” The combination of God referring to himself as “*The Alpha and the Omega*” and “*the Beginning and the End*” within the same verse occurs in two other references in Revelation (21:6 & 22:13). If this other possible reading from Rev 1:8b is allowed, the combination of “*the Alpha and the Omega*” and “*the Beginning and the End*” would occur three times in Revelation. In fact, if the variant reading for Rev 1:8b is allowed, the book of Revelation would then contain three occurrences of God calling himself “*The Alpha and Omega*” (Rev 1:8b; 21:6; 22:13), three occurrences of God calling himself “*The First and the Last*” (Rev 1:17;

2:8; 22:13), and three occurrences of God calling himself “*The Beginning and the End*” (Rev 1:8b; 21:6; 22:13). There would be three repetitions of three distinct statements in which God is designating himself as the initiator and completer.

	Alpha & Omega	Beginning & End	First & Last
Rev 1:8	X	X*	
Rev 1:18			X
Rev 2:8			X
Rev 21:6	X	X	
Rev 22:13	X	X	X
Total Uses	3 Uses	3 Uses	3 Uses

(* If the Variant Reading is Allowed)

We See God’s Nature Before the Descriptions of Chaos on Earth

Life on earth, during the time of “*the things which must take place after these things*” (Rev 4:1), will seem out of control. There will be no precedent for such upheaval in politics, religion, the environment, the celestial, war, disease, famine and death (Luke 21:25-59). Before these unprecedented events are portrayed, we are reminded that the chaotic and seemingly hopeless times are authored by the True God who permits even horrific things to accomplish his purposes.

The Antichrist is a Creature Bound to the Flow of History

“*The Alpha and the Omega,*” “*the Beginning and the End,*” “*the First and the Last.*” The three repetitions of these three statements convey the same important truth. We are reminded that the progress of history began and will be completed by God. He has determined that history is to be played out in the constant procession of present moments that come from the unknown future and continue on toward the fixed and decided past. All three statements remind us that history has a course and destination determined by its Author. Life is not a random series of disconnected events without purpose or culmination.

History will reach the completion in God that he desires.

The declarations that the Author and Finisher of history is beyond the restrictions of its flow of events remind us that the true God transcends all bonds of time and ability. The Antichrist could never be an effective challenger to the infinite God. The Antichrist, as a creature, is himself bound to history. The Antichrist is allowed to play a part in the unfolding of the history that its Author is directing toward his predetermined end.

Description of the Antichrist in the 2nd Set of Literary Patterns

The subject in the second set of three literary presentations from Revelation 17 does not require much discussion.

The beast which you saw ...

Revelation 17:8a [*]

as they see the beast that ...

Revelation 17:8c [*]

and the beast ...

Revelation 17:11

The term “*beast*” should prompt vivid remembrances. As we have read up through Rev 17:8, we have observed a great deal concerning the beast and his activities. From as far back in the biblical record as Daniel 7 the portrayal of the Antichrist has been observed.

Review of the Activities of the Antichrist from Previous Passages

The Antichrist, called the other horn in Daniel 7, removes 3 of the original 10 rulers of a confederated political regime (Dan 7:8; 7:20; 7:24). This other horn, the Antichrist, also becomes a ruler himself over one of the original 10 kingdoms or regions. The Antichrist rules 6th in order as the supreme executive of the central authority over the confederated regions (Rev 17:10). The Antichrist is killed by an intentional attack with a deadly weapon (Rev 13:3; 13:12; 13:14; 17:8a; 17:8c; 17:11).

To the utter amazement of the entire world, the Antichrist lives again having been resurrected from the dead (Rev 13:3-4a; 13:12; 13:14;

17:8a; 17:8c; 17:11). The Antichrist accepts the voluntary worship of most of the world (Rev 13:4b) and violently insists upon the complete worship of all the world (Rev 13:12; 13:15). The Antichrist assumes political power again as the 8th ruler (Rev 17:11), and retains this power for 42 months (Rev 13:5; Dan 7:25). The Antichrist enters the rebuilt Jewish Temple and sits in the holiest place within it, declaring himself to be God (2 Thes 2:3-4). By entering and sitting in the holiest place of the temple, the Antichrist defiles it and likely initiates what Jesus described as "*the Abomination of Desolation*" first prophesied by Daniel (Matt 24:15;

Dan 9:27). The Antichrist will blaspheme God and his followers (Dan 7:8; 7:11; 7:20; 7:25; Rev 13:1; 13:5-6). The Antichrist will make war upon the followers of the Lamb of God and overcome them (Dan 7:21; 7:25; Rev 13:7; 17:14).

The Antichrist will lend his unparalleled worldwide authority to one who will serve him as a False Prophet (Rev 13:11-12a). This False Prophet of the Antichrist will perform amazing supernatural signs and wonders in order to reinforce the Antichrist's claim of divinity (Rev 13:13-14). With the approval of the Antichrist, the False Prophet will prohibit anyone from buying or selling who has not received the mark of the Antichrist on his body (Rev 13:16-17).

All who do not worship the Antichrist and receive his mark will be subject to death (Rev 13:15b). We should remember all of these things when we read in Rev 17:8-11 that the subject of the three skillfully prepared literary presentations is "*the beast*."

Contrasts From the 2nd Set of Literary Patterns

When we read of the "*beast*" in Rev 17:7-11, we recall the previous prophecies about his activities. The three skillfully prepared literary presentations in Revelation 17 should also put us in remembrance of the three original literary templates in Revelation 1 & 4. The similarity among these literary patterns prompts us to thoughtfully ponder the descriptions of the eternal, holy, omnipotent God, who is the Author and Finisher of history, a history which includes the activities of the Antichrist. Although possessing some supernatural abilities, the Antichrist has a part on history's stage but is bound to that history as

a creature. We should clearly understand that the Antichrist, while claiming to be God, must continue to inhabit only the moment by moment existence of the present time dimension. The true God, by contrast, exists beyond the bonds of time and is the author of time, being himself the Eternal Creator.

God's Eternity & Uniqueness Seen in the Context of Scripture

The penetrating message of the three original literary templates in Rev 1:4, 1:8, and 4:8 is that God exists continually, and that he is alone in such existence. God is. God is unique. The modern reader, a first-century Jewish reader, and all readers of Scripture between then and now have had the opportunity to experience the full impact of these three presentations of God's essence when considered in the broader context of the Scriptures at hand. A reader in the first century would have had the rich heritage of the Old Testament in the original Hebrew and possibly its Greek translation. Readers in subsequent generations, including our own, have the additional witness of the New Testament, from which the reader's mind could draw appropriate and illuminating comparisons when encountering the powerful statements about God's existence in the three original literary statements of Revelation 1 & 4.

Scripture Confirms God's Essence and Nature

The more intimate a reader can be with the broad expanse of the biblical texts, the more powerfully he will be prompted to consider the crucial implications of the three literary presentations of God as they further contrast with the three similarly patterned presentations about the Antichrist. Those able to read Revelation in its original language of Greek would immediately make mental connections with several Old Testament passages as Revelation 1 & 4 were encountered. Many readers during the first centuries after the establishment of the church read the New Testament texts in their original Greek.

The Old Testament passages which might first spring to mind for the Greek reader would be from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. This Greek translation was completed in the Egyptian city of Alexandria in approximately 200 B.C. Also known as the Septuagint

or LXX, the Greek translation, would have been familiar to most Jews in the first century, and probably intimately familiar to some Jews who did not possess an intimate familiarity with the Hebrew Old Testament. In addition to Jewish readers, Gentiles also could have availed themselves of these Old Testament sources. Several of those Old Testament passages will be briefly considered as they constitute a portion of the literary and theological context of the Old Testament. They are passages that speak powerfully to readers of any generation.

An Example from Exodus 3:14

As we encounter the three original literary templates which vividly portray the eternalness of God, our thoughts must be brought back initially to the well-known passage of Exod 3:14. God is responding to a question from Moses. Moses is being sent back to Egypt as an instrument through whom God will deliver the Hebrews from slavery.

Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me. 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?"

Exodus 3:13 What is God Like?

God answers Moses' question directly in Exod 3:15. Who is this God that has commissioned Moses to deliver the Hebrews from their slavery? Moses was to tell them:

"The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you."

Exodus 3:15b

Behind Moses' request to know the name of God is the question of 'What are You like?' Moses wanted some name from God that would describe his essential nature, both for his own understanding as well as for the Israelites he was going to lead. By asking for God's name, Moses was asking in essence, 'What name best describes You?' [[68](#)]

The Answers from God

In responding to Moses' underlying question, God first turns to the

question of what he is. The God who is speaking to Moses from a burning bush responds with simple words that have taxed men's understanding for thousands of years. The original Hebrew of God's reply in Exod 3:14 consists of three words, two of which are identical:

אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה - *"I am the I am"*

The two Hebrew verbs אֶהְיֶה are in the imperfect 'tense' and could also, therefore, render God's reply as *"I will be that which I will be,"* or possibly, *"I will be that which I am being."* Another translation could be, *"I am being the I will be."* However one translates God's three-word Hebrew response, it is clear that God purposefully intended to communicate his timelessness through his chosen name.

The Greek Captures the Meaning of the Original Hebrew

The Greek translators adeptly captured this timelessness in their rendering of the Hebrew into the Greek of the Septuagint. The Hebrew phrase of Exod 3:14 is translated in the Greek LXX as:

Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν *"I am the one who is (continually) existing."*

God's first reply to Moses' question *"Whom shall I say has sent me?"* is:

"I am the I am ... Tell the sons of Israel the I am has sent me to you"

Exodus 3:14 [*]

The Greek LXX could be translated as:

"I am the one who is (continually) existing. Thus, you will say to the sons of Israel 'The one who is (continually) existing has sent me to you'"

Exodus 3:14 [*/LXX]

The Greek Translation of Exodus 3:14 Explained

The next few paragraphs are somewhat technical in nature, but they are not long. If the reader decides to skip over them, please observe

this one point. In the name God gave himself in Exod 3:14, the last two Greek words are the very same two words found in each of the three original literary templates in Revelation 1 & 4 that describe God's continuous existence.

Some Greek speaking readers regarded the last two Greek words as the name God gave himself. [69] Philo and Josephus, who were prominent Greek speaking Jews of their day, both used *ὁ ὢν* as the divine name originally given in Exod 3:14. On the other hand, and what is more probable, the first two Greek words were intended to capture the meaning of the personal name, with the following two terms being an explanation. [70] This view understands the first *אֶהְיֶה* as conveying the divine name which is translated into the Greek as *Ἐγώ εἰμι*. The use of the next two terms *אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה* is given as an explanation which is rendered into Greek as *ὁ ὢν*. With this understanding, God gives His name first and immediately provides an explanation or expansion of what His name means. The Hebrew would then be *"I am being the I will be."* The Greek LXX would, therefore, have the name of God be *Ἐγώ εἰμι* meaning *"I Myself am being."* The next two Greek words *ὁ ὢν* would be an explanation *"the one who continually is existing."*

Taken together, this pivotal text of Exod 3:14 would then be rendered from the Greek LXX as:

Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν *"I am the one who is (continually) existing."*

Thus, the Greek LXX accurately captures God's timelessness which he communicated to Moses and the Israelites by his divine name in Exod 3:14.

The 3 Original Templates are Connected to the Name of God

The timeless eternity of God is the intended lasting impression one receives as the divine name is encountered in Exod 3:14. This same timeless eternity of God is also conveyed with accuracy and power in the 3 identical lines of the 3 original literary templates:

ὁ ὢν	<i>“the one who is (continually) existing”</i>
καὶ ὁ ἦν	<i>“and the one who was (continually) existing”</i>
καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος	<i>“and the one who is coming”</i>

These three lines, which are repeated three times in Revelation 1 & 4, capture the power of God’s self-declared name “*I Myself am being*” (Exod 3:14). [\[71 \]](#)

The Same Words in Exodus 3:14 are in the 3 Original Templates

We would naturally understand these three lines together as being another way of intriguingly capturing the timelessness or eternalness of God, which is part of the essential meaning of God’s name. This shared meaning is also partly made possible because the two Greek words comprise the first line in all three original templates in Revelation 1 & 4, and are the same two words used in God’s self-declared name in Exod 3:14. [\[72 \]](#)

אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה - *“I am being the I will be”* (Hebrew/MT)

Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν *“I Myself am the one who is (continually) existing.”* (LXX)

The Divine Name & the 3 Original Templates are Synonymous

Both the divine name in Exod 3:14 and the three lines from Revelation 1 & 4 are synonymous in meaning, stated with simple eloquence, and penetratingly inescapable. God is with us in time, and yet completely unbound by its reach. The “*I am being*” God continually exists in present time, in past time, and in future time, yet beyond all realms of time. Thus, God is timeless and eternal. As we encounter the three lines, presented three times in Revelation 1 & 4, our thoughts immediately travel to Exod 3:14 and God’s declaration of his name. Even if the reader is not familiar with the Hebrew or the Greek, the stress on God’s timelessness should cause this passage to leap to the front of the reader’s thoughts.

The Historical Context of Exodus 3:14

In the larger historical context of Exod 3:14, the timelessness of God's chosen name would clearly contrast with the cult of Pharaoh worship. The elaborate preparations for the Pharaoh's death would involve substantial portions of Egypt's population and require great expenditures of national wealth and energy. The Pharaoh, who is worshiped as a god, must be assisted in the preparations for his journey to the afterlife. The Hebrews' God, on the other hand, needs no assistance to continue his existence. God characterizes himself to the Hebrew slaves in Egypt as the timeless one - "*I Myself am the one who is (continually) existing*" (Exod 3:14 LXX).

Other Biblical Passages & God's Timeless Existence

There are many Old and New Testament passages which might flood into our minds as the three original literary templates are encountered in Revelation 1 & 4. In addition to Exodus 3, Isaiah 6, and Ezekiel 1 already discussed, there are a wealth of passages in which the eternalness, holy separate uniqueness, and omnipotence of God are expressed in language very similar to the contexts of the three literary presentations of Rev 1:4, 1:8, and 4:8 (Deut 32:39; Isa 41:4; 43:10-11; 44:6-8; Matt 22:32; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:70; John 8:18-58; 13:19; 18:5-8). In addition, passages such as Rev 11:16-17 and 16:5-7 also speak with language very similar to the three literary passages in Revelation 1 & 4 to the timelessness and eternalness of the true God.

Intimacy with Scripture Gives a Broader Understanding of God

As the rich theological and literary reinforcements are brought to remembrance through our encounter with Rev 1:4, 1:8, and 4:8, the utter uniqueness of the Creator is appreciated with greater vigor. The uniqueness of God with respect to time is witnessed. God is continually existing in the present, past, and future. Being unaffected by the movement or flow of time reinforces his claim to uniqueness or holiness. God is unaffected by time because time is part of what he created. Not being restricted by any created thing highlights that God is uncaused. As the only uncaused or uncreated being, God is unique and thus separate from his creatures in holiness. The holiness, the

eternalness and the omnipotence of God emphasize each other. Together they constitute an impenetrable bulwark that bars any deluded claimant from divine prerogatives.

Multiple Descriptions in Numerous Passages Help Us See God

Human language strains to capture how unrestricted the True God is by any aspect of his creation. Humanity is continually bound by our creaturely ties to various realms of the created order. Our existence in this realm is tied to the flow of time. No one can remain in this existence and be free from the bonds of time. We are restricted to the procession of present moments that flow continually from the unknown future. In each present moment, we share consciousness and limited exercise of will. We can know each other and continue to exert our will because we all live in the same present moment, which is continually replenished from yet-to-be present moments that reside in future time. As each present moment is experienced by all of us collectively, it also slips into the fixed and frozen past. We can see the results of our choices in the memory of past moments, but we cannot alter those moments once they become past time. We cannot imagine nor express without great difficulty an existence not tied to the continuous flow of present moments from the undefined future, which becomes the fixed and unalterable past. All our languages and thoughts are oriented to this existence within time.

The Continually Existing Unique God & the Antichrist

When describing the interaction of the Antichrist's political fortunes with his personal experiences of death and resurrection, the angel does so by using the same literary templates which were previously used to convey the eternalness, separateness, and unlimited power of the true God. By casting the three depictions of the Antichrist in past, present, and future times, the angel invites us to contrast the Antichrist with God who was previously described in similar literary structures.

The 'creatureliness' of the Antichrist is seen in his 'noneternalness.' While the Antichrist is resurrected back from death to life, the Antichrist does not continuously exist in all dimensions of time. The

Antichrist is absent in the present time of all three literary presentations in Rev 17:8a, 8c, & 11. The Antichrist is repeatedly said to know personal destruction in future time. This is to be contrasted with God whose personal name means "*I am being*." In Exod 3:14, God declares that his name means, "*I am being the I will exist*." Since the Antichrist is bound to and restricted by time, he is not unique. The Antichrist shares the essential creaturely existence that is the essence of all humanity.

Just because the Antichrist conquers death does not mean that he is no longer a created being. The Antichrist owes his continued existence to the timeless, omnipotent, and utterly unique holy God.

Heaven's Answer to the Antichrist's Divine Claims

It is with great irony that the angel in Revelation 17 uses the literary patterns revealing the true God to disclose the timing, sequence and interrelated events surrounding the Antichrist's resurrection and ascension to power. The eternal, unique in holiness, sole possessor of unlimited and unrestricted power, the Author and Finisher of history, is contrasted with the claims to deity by the Antichrist.

The Antichrist is a creature. The true God is the creator of all. The Antichrist as a creature is bound to the forward march of time, both before and after his resurrection. The eternal God is separate from and exists beyond the restrictions of time, while still a full participant in all moments of time. The Antichrist, though endowed with some supernatural abilities, is still just a man. The Holy God is uncreated and thus entirely unique in his being.

Although the Antichrist is resurrected back to life from death, he is not God. Despite this supernatural result, the Antichrist does not inhabit the hidden realms of eternity nor the unknown uncreated fellowships which only the members of the triune Godhead can know.

Contrasting the Resurrection of the Antichrist & the Eternal God

This is how the angel describes the Antichrist, who will defy death, claim divinity, but be the first to suffer the second death:

And the beast which you saw

*was
and is not
and is about to ascend up out of the abyss
and into destruction he goes.*

*And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose name has
not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the
world,*

*as they see the beast that
was
and is not
and will come*

Revelation 17:8 [*]

This is how the One who sits upon the throne is described by heavenly creatures.

*Day and night they do not cease to say,
“Holy Holy Holy
is the Lord God,
the Omnipotent
the one who was
the one who is
and the one who is coming”*

*and when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to
Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the
twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the
throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will
cast their crowns before the throne, saying.*

*“Worthy are You,
our Lord and our God,
to receive glory and honor and power;
for You did create all things,
and because of Your will
they existed and were created.”*

Revelation 4:8b-11 [*]

CONCLUSION

When we begin to realize the vast destruction of this future rebellion, and the horrifying eternal consequences for all who allow themselves to be deceived by the Antichrist's divine delusions, we wince, cringe, and look away. We somehow know that permitting ourselves to fully dwell on that future would bring overwhelming grief. At different points during our examination of these future times, we all, of necessity, have had to look away. We take fleeting glimpses only and dare not look too long.

Yet, for those who must live through the horror of such times, looking away will not be an option. The Antichrist will rise to the pinnacle of earthly power, and brutally deal with any unwilling to yield to his claims to be God. The terror and devastation we see only through short glimpses will be the inescapable reality for everyone. In addition to the ruin brought by the Antichrist will be the culminating judgments from the true God on a rebellious world.

Still, we can't help but sincerely wish this future need not come. We wish that all who are created in God's image would willingly yield to his perfect will. Humanity, however, does not yield to its Maker, but rather lives in rebellion against the One whose perfect will alone can bring joy. Unless we yield to the call of God, we invite the judgment we deserve but may avoid. The heartache of realizing that humanity rejects wholeness when we reject the Creator weighs heavily upon everyone who has found that joy through him. The rebellion, so horrible, cruel and destructive, cannot continue forever. So, judgment must fall.

Yet the judgment itself awakens many to the hopelessness of life apart from the Almighty, and many do yield. In the middle of judgment, and even because of it, multitudes find joy and peace in repentance and submission. Even the severity of God will produce fruit.

*Come, my people, enter into your rooms,
And close your doors behind you;
Hide for a little while,*

*Until indignation runs its course,
For behold, the Lord is about to come out from His place
To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity;
And the earth will reveal her bloodshed,
And will no longer cover her slain.*

...

*Seek the Lord while He may be found;
Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the Lord,
And He will have compassion on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.
“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.
“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
And do not return there without watering the earth,
And making it bear and sprout,
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;
So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”*

Isaiah 26:20-21; 55:6-11

The Lord, the Lord-God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.

Exodus 34:6-7a

APPENDIX ONE

This appendix looks at issues that may have arisen from Chapter Two. Specifically, why the 70 weeks of Dan 9:24-27 should be seen as 70 groups of 7 years; Whether there will be a third temple in Jerusalem; Does Luke 21 primarily apply to the events of 70 A.D.; How Rev 11:1-3 may suggest the sharing or dual usage of the temple mount between Jewish worshipers and Gentile.

Daniel 9:26-27

The 70 - 7's - The Context Favors Actual Numeric Values

The 70 - 7's Coattail Nicely upon Jeremiah's 70 Years

The context of Daniel 9 favors non-figurative usage. Daniel's prayer was based upon Jeremiah's prophecy. In two passages Jeremiah indicates that the captivity would last for 70 years.

Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, "Because you have not obeyed My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north," declares the Lord, "and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, and against its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them a horror, and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. ... And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation," declared the Lord, "for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation."

Jeremiah 25:8-9,11-12

For thus says the Lord, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."

Jeremiah 29:10-11

After reading this, Daniel seems to count up the years of the captivity up to that point. Would he do this if he didn't assume the 70 years were a definite length of time that was knowable from the passages in Jeremiah? Daniel's prayer was based upon the assumption that Jeremiah's prophetic use of the number 70 was nonfigurative. Gabriel's use of the 70-7s immediately follows the prayer by Daniel, which was itself prompted by the realization that 70 actual years in captivity had or was very nearly accomplished. The length of each 7 finds easier paths for interpretation when they are seen as years, rather than any other consistent measurement of time.

The Context of Daniel Favors Consistent Numeric Values

There are those who do not hold the "weeks" as having any direct correlation to time. For various reasons, some hold that Gabriel's words should not be viewed as definite consistent measurable lengths of time. Those who hold to this view, or some likeness of it, would see the inconsistencies I outline below as the wrong argument. If no real measurement of time is intended when Gabriel speaks of time, then inconsistencies of timing are not inconsistencies at all. Yet, this view of Gabriel's intent is not based upon anything in the passage, but upon a presumption that whatever Gabriel did intend to say, he did not intend to communicate knowable lengths of time. This view seems odd when the contents of the passage are considered because measurements of time are found throughout. In fact, it seems that the whole intent of Gabriel in 9:24-27 was to provide a basic timeline of prophetic events in answer to Daniel's prayer.

Numerals in Daniel Represent the Actual Value of the Number

When other lengths of time are examined in Daniel, especially when they are part of a prophetic message, these lengths of time are found to be just that - knowable, measurable spans of time. There does not seem to be a single instance of a number in Daniel's prophetic messages that is clearly something other than a knowable numeric value.

Does the 70th Week of Daniel 9 Follow from the 69?

The following discussion assumes that numbers in Daniel are knowable consistent values, even when relating to time. Assuming numbers represent their normal values, then the 70 weeks in Dan 9:24-27 represent 70 groups of 7 years each, or 490 years in total. More precisely, this discussion is about the relationship that the very last group of 7 has to the rest.

So, does the 70th week flow from the end of the 69th, or is there a break before the last week begins? There are only two possibilities for placement of the 70th week. It clearly cannot come before the previous 69 weeks, or it wouldn't be the 70th. The two possibilities are that the 70th week begins as soon as the 69th concludes, or that it does not. If not, then why not, and when does it begin?

The Events from Daniel 9:26

Our first reading of Dan 9:24-27 might lead us to see the 70 weeks or 490 years as continuing uninterrupted from their beginning to end. Yet there are some points that should make us pause. First, however, let's review the chronological locations for the events that happen after the 69th week. What are the possible 'when's' for these events that are not directly contradicted by the prophecies themselves?

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Daniel 9:26a

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

Daniel 9:27

If No Break - Daniel 9:26 must Happen During the 70th Week

If the weeks of years all follow directly after each other, then the only 'when' for the terrible events of v. 26 is during the 70th week or after it.

Of these two possibilities, either during or after, one seems very unlikely indeed. If the weeks of years flow from beginning to end without pause, then the death of the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem with its temple must take place during the 70th week.

Here's why. Gabriel is clear that they happen after the 69th. After the 70th there is the arrival of those six wonderful aspects of restoration for the Jewish people given in v. 24. It would be difficult to contend that the death of the Messiah and the destruction mentioned as coming after the 69th week would actually come about after the end of the 70 weeks. God set apart those 70 weeks of years for the judgment of his people. When the 70 weeks of years are over, it seems reasonable that there would be no further punishments. Therefore, those who hold that the weeks continue without interruption must see the destruction and the Messiah's death as happening during the seven years of the 70th week. Of the two possible 'when's' for the terrible events of Dan 9:26, the more reasonable location is during the 70th week. Remember, this is only if you believe that the 70 weeks of years in Daniel 9 all follow directly after each other.

What If the Events from Daniel 9:26 Happen in the 70th Week

So, let's consider the implications if these events occur during the 70th week. First, we must keep in mind that Gabriel also describes other events which he clearly places during these last 7 years. The sacrifices were halted midway or 3 ½ years into this last week. Also occurring at or near this time is the Abomination of Desolation. Dan 12:11 informs us that these two events occur very near each other in time. Under this scenario, the death of the Messiah and the destruction of the temple and the city occur in the same week that the sacrifices are performed, then halted, and that the Abomination of Desolation occurs.

If there are sacrifices and temple destruction in the same 7year period, then we can be fairly certain that the sacrifices do not occur after the temple is destroyed. So, the sacrifices come first. Since these sacrifices are not stopped until the midpoint of the 7 years, then the temple destruction could not happen before the midpoint either. However, since the end of the final week brings about restoration for

the Jewish people, the temple destruction must occur before the 7 years are ended. This would leave a 3 ½ year window of time during which the temple could be destroyed. If one holds to a continuous flow for the weeks of years in Daniel 9, then the temple would have to be destroyed during the final half of the final week of years.

The Messiah's death would also occur during the final 7 years. This would mean that his death and the destruction of the temple and the city could not be separated in time by more than 7 years or they would not all take place in the 70th week. Additionally, since the final 7 years seems to coincide with the establishment of a firm covenant, this covenant would need to be established just after the 69th week had ended and just as the 70th had begun.

Problems If the Events of Daniel 9:26 Happen in the 70th Week

Gabriel's Curious Statement

There is a curious statement by Gabriel in v. 26. He says that the death of Messiah and the destruction of the city and the temple all happen, not during the 69th week, but *after* it. Why would Gabriel reveal these very serious events in Israel's future in such a way? If the weeks of years all follow each other and the death of Messiah and the destruction all occur after the 69th week, then why didn't Gabriel simply say that they would occur in the 70th week? This curious wording by Gabriel is certainly not proof in itself that the weeks of years may not flow from beginning to end. But it is something to put in the back of our mind until we begin to look at this issue in more detail later. It is also a point that should be answered by those who hold that there is no break between the 69th and 70th weeks.

Conflict with History

Another point to consider is that a continuous flow of weeks would put the death of the Messiah and the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem all occurring in the same 7-year period of time. But if we believe that Jesus' death was the death of the Messiah mentioned by Gabriel in Dan 9:26, then this view is in conflict with the history of this time. While we do not know exactly when Jesus died and rose, we do

know the general time when it occurred. Jesus was crucified sometime after 30 A.D. We do know with even more certainty that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Romans under Titus, their general and future emperor. Clearly, these events in history are separated by much more than 7 years.

Such an inconsistency between an interpretation of prophecy and the details of its actual fulfillment in history means that one or more of the underlying assumptions is in error. If the numerical values for the 70 - 7's in Daniel 9 represent actual consistent lengths of time, and are not days, months, or decades, but years, then the other variables considered here must have at least one error.

Which Assumption is the Problem?

It was assumed that the 70th week of years flowed uninterrupted from the end of the 69th week. It was also assumed that Gabriel's words of the Messiah being "*cut off*" and "*having nothing*" indicated his rejection and death. It was further assumed that the death of the Messiah which Gabriel was speaking to was the crucifixion of Jesus. One or more of these assumptions must be in error.

How Do You Count to Seven?

The numerical values used elsewhere in the book of Daniel are not contradicted. Nothing requires the numbers to mean something other than the values they would normally represent. The assumption that the 70 - 7's represent years seems consistent, because days and months would be too short and decades would be too long. Further confirmation about the length of time comes from Daniel 12 where a 3 ½ year period of time seems to be referred to by two different expressions. "*A time, times and a division of time*" appear in the same context as "*1290 days*". Both are a good approximation of 3 ½ years. Dan 9:27 refers to the "*middle of the week*" seeing the cessation of sacrifices and grain offerings. If the week is made up of 7 years, then the middle of the 7-year period would also be 3 ½ years. That the numbers represent consistent knowable values, and that the weeks are composed of 7 years, seems justified and not the source of the contradiction.

Adding it Up - Is Jesus the "Anointed One" in Daniel 9:26?

We assumed above that Jesus is the Messiah mentioned in Dan 9:26. We also assumed that the expressions "*cut off*" and "*having nothing*" indicate the Messiah's death. The Hebrew word Messiah means "anointed one" (as does the Greek word "christos"). If Jesus is not the "anointed one" in v. 26, then who else fits this title and comes on schedule according to Gabriel's timeline? Proceeding on the conclusion that the 70 - 7's are years, we have some indication when this Messiah should appear in history. Dan 9:25 indicates that the Messiah appears prior to the end of the 69th week. So, if we trace 483 years from the "*decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*" (v. 25), we should have a good idea who the "anointed one" may be. The first task is to identify which decree fits this requirement and when it was proclaimed.

Where is the Starting Line? - Which Decree?

The decree that starts the counting up of 70 - 7's is one that is intended to "*restore and rebuild Jerusalem.*" It may include more, but it must include this aspect. While there is no explicit mention of the temple in v. 25, Daniel's deep longing for it presupposes it is not ignored in God's plans. There are 3 decrees which could be the potential starting point for Gabriel's prophecy in Dan 9:25. Let's examine the 3 candidates.

So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

Daniel 9:25

Should We Start Counting from 538 B.C.?

The first candidate is the decree by Cyrus found in both 2 Chr 36:23 and Ezra 1:2-4. This decree did mark the end of the 70 years of captivity for the Jewish people. Under this decree, they could return to their own land with the king's assistance. The decree is dated to 538 B.C., which was the first year of Cyrus' reign over the expanded kingdom, including the now conquered empire of Babylon (2 Chr

36:22). The decree provides for the travel of Jewish people willing to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. The first chapter of Ezra lists some of the material help Cyrus made available for this undertaking. Yet, for all this, there is no mention or indication of rebuilding or restoring Jerusalem. While a settlement around the new temple would be expected, the primary focus of this decree involves the safe travel of willing Jews to go and re-establish their religion in their own land. Provision is not made for the reconstruction of Jerusalem itself.

Should We Start Counting from 445 B.C.?

There is a decree for the restoration of Jerusalem. In Nehemiah 2:5-8, King Artaxerxes gives permission for Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem to rebuild its walls. This support was granted in the 20th year of the king's reign, which has been placed at 445 B.C.

Yet two points are troublesome for this decree.

More Trouble with History

The first problem is the date itself. If this decree is really the one that starts the count of the 70 - 7's, then the end of the 69th week, using normal solar years, is around 38 A.D. No one is known to history who was special enough at that time to be called an "*anointed one*" by Gabriel in his prophecy.

Making It All Fit

To bring the date back to the time of Jesus, those who support this decree do not use a solar year of 365 days for the measurement of the 483 years. Instead, they use a 'prophetic year.' This type of year is said to consist of only 360 days. Even if it were possible to find some evidence that a prophetic year was used elsewhere, its employment here does not lend credibility to this scheme. The almost torturous calculation of totaling all the days in 483 prophetic years (173,880), then dividing that by the number the of days in a solar year, seems beyond the native Hebrew counting schemes used before the adoption of the Arabic numbering system in the 9th century A.D. [[73](#)] Yet, this is precisely what the Jews of Jesus day would have been expected to calculate to anticipate the coming time of their Messiah.

Additionally, the context of Daniel 9 involves the prophecies of Jeremiah which contained 70 years. These 70 years were reckoned according to well-known and used calendars of the day. No special 'prophetic year' seems to be involved, even though these 70 years in captivity serve as the basis for the 70 - 7's in Gabriel's prophecy.

Why Would Nehemiah Think That?

Finally, in the opening verses of the book, Nehemiah asks his brother and others about the Jews who had survived the captivity and about Jerusalem. Their report about the reproach of the Jewish survivors provokes an understandable response. However, he is also very moved by the condition of the walls of Jerusalem. The point that is troublesome is not that he is distressed about the broken walls, but that he almost seems surprised by their condition. Nehemiah's reaction seems to suggest that he had reason to think the condition of the city's walls should have improved since their destruction by the Babylonians. Yet, if the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem is dated after Nehemiah makes his request to the king, then he should not have had any expectation that the walls would be in better shape.

We Start Counting from 457 B.C.

However, Nehemiah's reaction to Jerusalem's broken walls is more understandable if a previous undertaking had been expected to improve things. It turns out Nehemiah had a good reason for expecting conditions in Jerusalem to be better. There was a previous decree. Ezra 7:11-26 gives us the details. Ezra 7:7 says that it was put into effect in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, or 457 B.C. This was 13 years before Nehemiah first approached the same king in the 20th year of his reign. The decree in Ezra 7 emphasizes the temple restoration, but it also gives Ezra additional authority. In 7:25, Ezra is specifically given the power to appoint rulers and judges "*in the province beyond the river.*" When he arrives, Ezra informs the king's rulers in other provinces about "*the king's edicts*" and receives their support.

Still further, in Ezra's prayer, he mentions raising up the temple in addition to Judea and Jerusalem.

For we are slaves; yet in our bondage, our God has not forsaken

us, but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.

Ezra 9:9

Whether Ezra was using “wall” metaphorically or literally, he was thankful that the king's decree had brought a time of peace in Judea and Jerusalem. These favorable conditions might have been one reason Nehemiah seems surprised to learn that

Jerusalem's walls were still in ruins more than a dozen years later. Counting off 483 years from this decree would bring the date to 27 A.D. (allowing for 1 B.C. to be followed by 1 A.D.). This would bring the 70 - 7's to an end as Jesus the Messiah begins to present himself to the Jewish people.

Summary of The Decrees

The decree of Cyrus did not include any provision for restoring Jerusalem. The second decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah in 445 B.C. does, but its date is so late that it does not seem to coincide with any “anointed one” coming to the Jewish people. However, Artaxerxes’ first decree in 457 B.C. does allow the 483 years to end at the time Jesus began his ministry. Also, the decree, while primarily focused on the temple's restoration, seems to provide a stable environment to carry out Israel's worship. That Jerusalem's walls were still in a state of disrepair after 13 years may have been another reason why Artaxerxes was willing to let his cup bearer leave to finally put things in order.

Others may disagree with this assessment. However, the primary point of looking at the decrees was to determine whether Jesus was the anointed one in Dan 9:26. The only person known to Jewish history likely to be referred to as the ‘anointed one’ 483 years from the beginning of these 3 decrees is Jesus. So, this element in our assumptions is not where the inconsistency lies.

Does 70 Come Right After 69?

The last assumption above was that the 70th week flowed directly after

the end of the 69th without interruption. If the other variables in the premise are credible, then we are still left with the problem of reconciling all the events of Dan 9:26 and 27 into one continuous 7-year block of time. History does not seem to favor the view that the 70th week of years begins when the 69th ends.

We found that history separates Jesus' death and the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by at least 35 years. However, these same three events cannot be separated by more than seven years if the 70th week of Dan 9:27 begins immediately after the end of the 69th week. We looked at the other variables or assumptions associated with the view and they do not appear to be the cause of this flawed interpretation. So, we are forced to consider alterations to the assumption that the 70th week follows the 69th week without interruption.

What Happens If His Death is Not During the 70th Week?

If the Messiah's death is excluded from the 70th week, presuming it to occur prior to the beginning of this last week of years, when could it occur and still be consistent with Dan 9:26? It cannot occur in the 69th week. Gabriel specifically uses the word "*after*" in connection with all three events in the verse.

The only way that the Messiah's death could still be after the 69th week but also not occur during the 70th week is if there is, in fact, a break between the two. It would be during this interim that the Messiah could be "*cut off*" and "*have nothing*" and still be consistent with the prophecy from Gabriel. By interpreting Gabriel's prophecy as anticipating a break before the beginning of the 70th week, we allow the numbers to still represent their normal values.

Things Still Don't Fit

However, there is still a problem. If we see only the Messiah's death occurring in the break between the last two weeks of years, we still encounter inconsistencies. Under this scenario, we are still assuming that the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem occur during the 70th week, which is in the form of a firm covenant. If the sacrifices of v. 27 are assumed to be those occurring before the Romans destroyed the

temple in 70 A.D., then what happens to initiate the “*firm covenant with the many*” about 3 ½ years before the sacrifices are taken away? What starts or enacts the firm covenant that begins the last 7 years of the 70 - 7's? Another problem with seeing the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by the Romans during this final seven years is that the end of these years is to bring about 6 wonderful conditions for Daniel's people.

*Seventy weeks have been decreed
for your people
and your holy city,
to finish the transgression,
to make an end of sin,
to make atonement for iniquity,
to bring in everlasting righteousness,
to seal up vision and prophecy,
and to anoint the most holy place.*

Daniel 9:24

All these things were to come about after the conclusion of the 70 weeks. History does not seem to suggest that everlasting righteousness has been brought in. [[74](#)]

Does the Coming of Christ Fulfill Daniel 9:24?

It may be suggested by some that all six of the conditions in Dan 9:24 have been accomplished by Christ's death and resurrection. However, we have just seen that the Messiah died after the 69th week but before the 70th week started. If the new covenant in his blood marks the realization of these 6 conditions, then we are not wrong to ask why they did not start sooner. Why does Gabriel not place these 6 conditions sometime during the break after the 69th week when the Messiah died and rose, or why not place them at the conclusion of the break just as the 70th week begins? If Christ is the realization of these 6 conditions as some may contend, then why does Gabriel say they occur after an additional seven years have elapsed?

The view that only the death of the Messiah occurs during a break between the 69th and 70th weeks leaves us without a start for the “*firm*

covenant” which would need to be around 66 A.D. It also would require the 6 conditions of Dan 9:24 to find fulfillment about 3 ½ years after the temple is destroyed, or about 73 A.D. This interpretation does not fit with history either. Envisioning only the death of the Messiah as occurring in a break between the 69th and 70th weeks presents many problems.

What Happens If the Destruction is Not in the 70th Week Either?

However, if all three events that happen after the close of the 69th week occur during a break before the 70th week begins, then the history of Jerusalem's destruction in A.D. 70 does not conflict with Gabriel's words. It simply leaves the initiation of the 7-year firm covenant as part of the future history that has not yet occurred.

Summary of Daniel 9

On the question of whether the 70th week of Daniel 9 flows uninterrupted from the end of the 69th, the implications of the passage seem against it. Those events in v. 26 said to occur after the end of the 69th week cannot be reconciled with the time constraints and events said to occur within the 70th week. History reveals an interim between the Messiah's death and the temple's destruction measured in decades not years. This fact makes it impossible that the events from v. 26 could all be found in the seven-year span of the 70th week of v. 27. Those events which the angel reveals as occurring after the end of the 69th week are not compatible within the constraints of the 70th week and demonstrate that the 70th and last week of years cannot follow directly after the end of the 69th week.

Daniel 12:11

Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river, and the other on that bank of the river. And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be until the end of these wonders?" And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish

shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed. As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?" And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. Many will be purged, purified, and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. And from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1290 days.

Daniel 12:5-11

Daniel 9 & 12 are connected by the chronological marks of 3

$\frac{1}{2}$ years during which the people of God would suffer desolations. Daniel 9 & 12 describe different aspects of the Abomination of Desolation. We can be certain of this, not only because they both refer to 'abominations' and 'desolations,' but also because they both involve the same 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ year length of time.

The "1290 days" prophecy in Dan 12:11 tracts almost completely with the 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ year period in Dan 9:27 (and Dan 7:25). This same length of time is 1st of 2 threads that tie these passages and their fulfillments together. The other thread is that both prophecies tell us the Abomination of Desolation occurs at the beginning of this 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ year period of time. These two threads tie Dan 9:27 & Dan 12:11 together in their fulfillment.

Dan 12:11 marks off this approximate 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ year period using a different measurement of time - 1290 days. This lends substantial support for the interpretation of the 70 - 7's as years through its clear connection with the last half of the 70th week. Half of 7 years is about 1278 days, if using a solar year. And 1290 days is very close to this 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ year mark.

Some might say that the Daniel 12 passage is not connected to the specifics of Dan 9:27. If when mentioning Daniel's prophecy of the Abomination of Desolation Jesus was referring to the Daniel 12 passage but not the specifics of Dan 9:27, then the question remains, to what period of past history does Dan 9:27 apply? Assuming one could make a reasonable case that Daniel 12 and Daniel 9 are not

referring to the same events, then, even if Daniel 12 is seen as referring to an event now in the past, what about the specific chronological components of the Dan 9:27 prophecy? To what do they speak? If not to known history, then they must either still be part of future history, or the way this verse is to be fulfilled must be different than the way the preceding verses in chapter 9 seem to have been fulfilled in past history.

2 Thessalonians

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

In this passage, we find that the Antichrist actually sits down in the temple while proclaiming that he is God. This defines some of the acts that may be part of the Abomination of Desolation. It further confirms the presence of a temple prior to the end.

Some may contend that this passage does not indicate a rebuilt temple in the future, but is concerned instead with the temple destroyed in 70 A.D. Their argument would be that the events Paul mentions must have occurred before 70 A.D. The son of destruction and his insistence on worship would describe the events surrounding the desecration of the temple following the capture of Jerusalem by Roman forces. However, this seems to run counter to the argument Paul is making in the chapter.

Paul says that the apostasy and the coming of the son of destruction are events that precede the coming of the Day of the Lord. Paul's argument is that believers will be united with Christ in resurrection

after the Day of the Lord comes. The Thessalonians could know that the Day of the Lord itself has not yet come because events that must precede it have not happened. Paul says these precursor events to the Day of the Lord are the revealing of the son of destruction who sits in the temple of God demanding worship, and a general apostasy or falling away from the faith.

It does not seem to make a great deal of sense that Paul would have chosen the revelation of the son of destruction as a precursor event if that event was prophetically close to his own time and the initiation of the Day of the Lord was prophetically distant. Should believers, who had previously read Paul's epistle and who heard about the events in 70 A.D. begin to expect the imminent arrival of the judgments connected to the Day of the Lord? Would it be an effective prophetic marker for believers if Paul's precursor event was only several decades away in its arrival, but separated by millennia from the time of the Day of the Lord?

Even more potent is the chronological placement of the apostasy. If, as some might contend, the defilement of the temple by the "*man of sin*" was an A.D. 70 event, what about the general falling away from the faith? Is that just prior to the Day of the Lord or much earlier? If the apostasy is later and the defilement is earlier, then one wonders why Paul mentions the earlier defilement at all. If the apostasy is earlier, when in church history did this occur? The history of the early church does not seem to reflect a period of general apostasy around the fall of Jerusalem. Also, if the defilement of the temple, as well as the general apostasy, were both nearer rather than later, would not their usefulness as identifiable precursor events be greatly diminished during the assumed long interim before the Day of the Lord judgments begin?

It flows more logically if we assume that the precursor events Paul mentions are chronologically near to the initiation of the Day of the Lord judgments. To have one or both of the two specified markers occur at least 19 centuries before the Day of the Lord does not seem the best interpretation of the text. If the defilement of the temple by the man of sin is still a distant precursor to the coming Day of the Lord, then a temple will need to exist at which this still coming

abomination will occur.

Luke 21

Introductory Proposal for Luke 21 and 70 A.D.

Christ's words in Luke 21 are not limited to the terrible events in 70 A.D. This will be demonstrated by explaining how the text's primary 'target' is not likely to be found in the events surrounding the 2nd temple's destruction, but is rather found in a time very close to Christ's return. We should not disavow that some elements in Luke 21 were intended to resonate with the Jewish nation's demise. Some of Christ's words in Luke 21 resonate in light of history, and that resonance with past historical events further illumines the distant target of his words.

Explanation for the Primary Application of Luke 21

There are four areas that should prevent us from envisioning the destruction of A.D. 70 as the complete application of Christ's warning. Three are internal indicators from the passage. The fourth involves the way Christ's words in Luke 21 compare with elements in other passages.

There are Definite 2nd Coming & Precursor Events in Luke 21

Christ's 2nd Coming is a More Distant Fulfillment

Since the second coming of Christ is admittedly found in Luke 21, it cannot be contested that elements of a more distant fulfillment are somehow in view. That Christ may have intended his words to primarily apply to more distant events is suggested by descriptions of his return found immediately after the description of Jerusalem's occupation. The disciples asked their Lord when he would return. Jesus answered them by describing conditions that will precede his coming. Then he backs up in time to describe how his followers will be treated. The persecution of Christ's followers precedes the great signs that herald his own return.

and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues

and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you,

Luke 21:11-12a

Immediately after his words concerning Jerusalem and Judea, Christ describes the great signs that precede his return.

And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations ... for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Luke 21:24-27

At least three distinct sets of events can be identified in a sequence. Last, is Christ's return in power. Prior to that are the great signs in heaven and earth. But before that, his followers will be persecuted. The fact that at least 2 of these periods are in the distant future certainly opens the passage up to that distant time. When Jerusalem's desolation and occupation are found immediately before the great events that signal his coming, then a more distant target for Christ's words about Jerusalem is not contextually inconsistent.

“.. in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled.”

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled.”

Luke 21:20-22

In Luke 21:22 Christ says the particular desolation of Jerusalem that is the target of his prophecy, will fulfill “*all things that are written.*” This seems to be implying that others also prophesied about these horrific events. This naturally leads to the question: if the events Christ is

targeting refer exclusively to those in 70 A.D., where are these other prophecies? The sentence *"these are days of vengeance in order that all things that are written may be fulfilled"* seems to restrict the potential applications of Christ's prophecy to only those which already possess additional witness in the Scripture's prophetic record.

Additionally, Luke reports Christ's use of this phrase within his exhortation to flee Jerusalem and Judea to avoid the woe that the stragglers will suffer. In the parallels to this discourse in Matthew 24 and Mark 14, Christ connects the prior prophetic writings of Daniel with the desolation that comes upon Judea and Jerusalem. Daniel's prophecies are not congruent with 70 A.D. (see the previous discussion on Daniel 9).

The phrase also seems to be suggesting more. Not only should we expect to find other prophecies about the same times and events surrounding Jerusalem's desolation, the events themselves are prophetically significant. For Jesus says that by those *"days of vengeance all things"* are fulfilled.

We should expect the events that accompany Jerusalem's fate and the horrors inflicted on its population to be reflected elsewhere in the prophetic record. Further, the events themselves fulfill *"all things"* in the prophetic annals about them.

So again, the question comes back to which messages in the prophetic library pertain to such events? If one sees 70 A.D. as the sole application of Christ's prophecy, then there must also be others that speak to the events of these times as well. They must be sufficient prophetic revelations to warrant the Son of God to emphasize their existence and fulfillment by those events.

Yet sufficient additional prophetic witness to the events that are clearly from 70 A.D. appears to be lacking. There is, however, abundant prophetic testimony to the final days of God's judgment. This seems to indicate that the more distant event is the primary focus of Christ's warning in Luke 21.

"until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"

Gentile Occupation in Luke 21

In Christ's prophecy of Luke 21:24, we find that Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot until "*the times of the Gentiles*" are fulfilled. This Gentile occupation of Jerusalem is said to be uninterrupted right up to the end of the times of the Gentiles. History informs us that the Gentiles took exclusive control of Jerusalem (removed the Jewish ruling element) through the Romans in 70 A.D. and maintained this possession for nearly 19 centuries. The question is whether the prophecy of Luke 21:24 refers to the Gentile occupation begun in 70 A.D. or to a different Gentile occupation.

If the primary target of Christ's prophecy was not that long period of Gentile occupation begun under Rome, then the primary target must still be in the future. There has been no other Gentile occupation of Jerusalem since that prophecy was given. Also, if the Gentile occupation of the 1st-century is not the primary target of Christ, we also know that there must be some intervening series of events between the different Gentile occupations of Jerusalem.

There are the two different Gentile components in this verse. Both components in Luke 21:24 involve Gentiles. There is the "*times of the Gentiles*," and the trampling of Jerusalem by Gentiles. However, they are not of the same length of time and involve different emphases of Gentile activity. Christ refers to both because both periods overlap.

And Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:24b

In this verse, we see that the two periods overlap and end at the same point in time. One period begins before the other but they both conclude together. The phrase "*times of the Gentiles*" in this verse does not identify the beginning of this period. Its use in v. 24 informs us that once the specific occupation Christ has in view has begun, Jerusalem will remain under this Gentile occupation until this period ends.

That the "*times of the Gentiles*" and the occupation of Jerusalem are, in fact, different components may be confirmed by contemplating the

opposite. If both are actually the same, why are both mentioned?
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Jewish Authority over Jerusalem was Reestablished in 1967

Even though there continues to be international disagreement about the status of Jerusalem, it is true that for more than 40 years the city has not been under direct Gentile control. Gentile forces are not now trampling the city underfoot. If the Gentile occupation Jesus was specifying really was the long occupation initiated by Rome in 70 A.D., then it would need to continue right up to the termination of the times of the Gentiles. But it did not. That long Gentile control over Jerusalem ended in 1967. Would anyone seriously suggest the "*times of the Gentiles*" ceased in 1967?

Yet, unless the "*times of the Gentiles*" ended before 1967, a discrepancy exists. Either the reestablished Jewish authority over Jerusalem in some way still does not end the trampling under foot by the Gentiles, or the long Gentile occupation of Jerusalem from 70 A.D. forward is not the specific Gentile trampling that Christ had primarily in view in Luke 21:24. Given the extent and duration of the national status the modern State of Israel possesses and that Jerusalem was united under the Jewish national authority in 1967, the burden of proof seems to lie with those who may claim that Jerusalem still is being "*trampled underfoot by the Gentiles.*"

If Jerusalem is to know an unbroken occupation by Gentiles from the events Christ spoke of in Luke 21:24 until the "*times of the Gentiles is fulfilled,*" then would not the events involving Jerusalem in 1967 mean that the time horizon of Christ's prophecy cannot be before that year, but after? Wouldn't current Jewish control of Jerusalem eliminate the events of 70 A.D. as a potential 'target' of Christ's prophetic words in Luke 21? Either Gentiles are trampling Jerusalem under foot since 1967 or they are not.

Jewish Authority and the Temple Mount

Some may contend that since the temple mount is still under Gentile control, then the Gentile occupation started in 70 A.D. must still be ongoing. However, the verse specifically has Christ referring to the

city of Jerusalem being *"trampled under foot by the Gentiles."* Some might answer that unless all the area within Jerusalem is under Jewish control, then Jewish authority is not complete enough to warrant the end of Gentile occupation. As long as the temple mount is not under Jewish control, Jerusalem is not completely under Jewish control. But this seems very different from saying that Gentiles are still trampling Jerusalem under foot.

Jewish Autonomy During Times of the Gentiles

Some may point out that Jerusalem could know repeated times of Gentile trampling. However, this would not buttress the interpretation that sees A.D. 70 as its fulfillment. If there can be episodic Jewish control within the overall greater period of Gentile domination, then this permits the possibility of a still future time of trampling by Gentiles after a period of Jewish authority. Allowing for possible Jewish control must also allow for the possibility of a still future period of Jewish control after which a different Gentile trampling may occur.

If the times of the Gentiles finds its beginning with Babylon's conquering of the southern kingdom of Judah, then the episode of Jewish autonomy between Greek and Roman dominance seems to support this understanding of interspersed periods of Jewish control within the *"times of the Gentiles."* If the Hasmonean period sets a precedent for interrupted Gentile control, and Jerusalem is currently experiencing Jewish authority, then an uninterrupted run of Gentile trampling prior to the end of the *"times of the Gentiles"* is both consistent with historical precedent, and places the trampling of Jerusalem in Luke 21:24 as future to today, not prior.

Jerusalem When the Times of the Gentiles Is Fulfilled

Christ is quite specific that the fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles will not involve Jewish control of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be *"trampled under foot by the Gentiles until"* the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled. So, the *"times of the Gentiles"* is still ongoing even though Jerusalem is currently under Jewish control. However, Gentiles must be the last to maintain control over Jerusalem as the times of the Gentiles draws to a close. Jerusalem will be surrounded by armies and

occupied by Gentiles again in the future.

Summary

If the target of Christ's words in Luke 21:24 were only the events of A.D. 70, then the times of the Gentiles would have concluded when the Gentile control over Jerusalem concluded. While the "*times of the Gentiles*" may have interspersed periods of Jewish control, the specific prophecy of Christ in Luke 21:24 that involves Gentile trampling of Jerusalem cannot. There must be a Gentile trampling of Jerusalem that concludes when the "*times of the Gentiles*" is fulfilled. The last ones to control Jerusalem before the times of the Gentiles ends are not Jews. They must be Gentiles.

The "*times of the Gentiles*" can only come to an end at the same time that a Gentile occupation is also ended.

If the 19-century long Gentile occupation of Jerusalem came to an end in 1967, and this was the occupation Christ had in view in Luke 21:24, then since the occupation ceased at this time, the times of the Gentiles must have also. If the Gentile occupation that began in A.D. 70 was, in fact, the primary target of Christ's prophecy, then the times of the Gentiles must have ended as well. Yet this seems unlikely.

The only foreseeable alternative to declaring the times of the Gentiles at an end as of 1967, while still holding to the position that the Gentile occupation of 70 A.D. was the target of Christ's prophecy, is to demonstrate that the Jewish authority now exercised over Jerusalem has not ended the Gentile trampling of the city. One must successfully demonstrate this view despite the fact that Luke 21:24 refers only to the trampling of Jerusalem, not its temple, and that the streets of Jerusalem have not known Gentile trampling for over 40 years. An attempt to demonstrate that Gentile trampling has not ceased because current Jewish control over Jerusalem does not extend to the temple mount seems to introduce an element not found in the prophecy. This would suggest it is less than the best interpretation.

The reestablishment of Jewish authority over Jerusalem by the modern nation of Israel has implications for the interpretation of Luke 21:24. Unless one can find cause to still see Jerusalem being trampled

underfoot by the Gentiles, another future Gentile trampling of Jerusalem that ends when “*the times of the Gentiles*” is fulfilled should be anticipated.

The Implications of the Parallel Nature of Luke 21

The preceding points were intended to show why the 1st century destruction of Jerusalem is not the intended 'target' of Christ's prophetic warning in Luke 21. If the events of 70 A.D. were not primarily in view as Christ spoke, then what was? This fourth point attempts to reinforce the argument advanced in previous portions of this appendix.

Luke 21, Matthew 24, and Mark 13 are parallel passages by means of verbatim and near verbatim expressions, content, structure and context. In fact, the level of parallel elements strongly links all three gospel passages. While there are some differences, the basic message is the same. The same occasion, same speaker, same general content, same immediate history and literary contexts (even the differences in expression in Luke share much of the same underlying meaning as Matthew and Mark). The combined effect of all this 'sameness' is the conviction that even stronger arguments must be marshaled to demonstrate why and how it could lead to different events in different periods of time as Christ's primary intended meaning. Thus, a greater understanding of one of these passages could shed light on one or both of the others.

If it could be credibly argued that Matthew 24 and Mark 13 find their fulfillment in 70 A.D., then the parallel nature they share with Luke 21 would require a 1st-century fulfillment also, and vice versa. So, what is present in the other two passages that puts their ultimate fulfillment in the still distant future?

Implications of “the Abomination of Desolation”

All three passages show Christ presenting a prophetic warning to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea. When the event he describes comes about, a calamity will befall them. In Matthew and Mark, one particular horror is prominent – the Abomination of Desolation. Christ further identifies this event as one that “*was spoken of through Daniel*

the prophet."

While the parallel passage in Luke does not contain Christ's use of this phrase, the similarity of the horrors to come upon Jerusalem and those who cannot escape are undeniably congruent. Does the absence of the phrase "*Abomination of Desolation*" in Luke eliminate it as an element of Christ's prophecy in this gospel? That would seem to hang a great deal upon its silence. It is not only possible that Christ's warning concerns the same events in all three gospels, the parallel nature of all three passages makes it very probable.

"The Abomination of Desolation Spoken of through Daniel"

Christ's words about the Abomination of Desolation in Matthew and Mark affect Luke. "*Abomination of Desolation*" is used twice in Daniel (Dan 11:31, 12:11), and is strongly implied 2 other times (Dan 8:9-14, 9:27). One direct and one indirect reference is associated with a Greek ruler (Dan 8:5-14, 21-26; 11:31). The other direct and indirect references involve a ruler and his people from the empire that follows Greece (Dan 9:27, 12:11). In Dan 11:31 the designation of "*Abomination of Desolation*" is used of a ruler who arises from the remnants of the Greek Empire in Syria (Dan 11:2-3). These direct and indirect references to the Seleucid king were already fixed in history when Christ spoke to his disciples on the Mount of Olives. Therefore, they could not have been part of Christ's prophetic warning of future events. There is another reference, however, which is connected to a ruler and his people.

Roman "Abomination of Desolation"

The remaining direct and indirect references to the "*Abomination of Desolation*" are Dan 12:11 and 9:27. The linkage between these two verses has already been demonstrated. The time span specified in Daniel 9 commences with an actual historical event, the command of a Persian king "*to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.*" While there are questions about which of the several edicts acted as the commencement point, marking off 490 years puts history well beyond the dominance of Greek power and into the Empire of Rome. Thus, the "*Abomination of Desolation*" Christ was referring to in Matthew 24

and Mark 13 was connected with the people of the Roman Empire.

Still Future Roman "Abomination of Desolation"

This may actually seem to support the view that the *"Abomination of Desolation"* of which Christ spoke was part of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but wait. There are other aspects of Daniel 9 to consider in relation to Christ's prophetic warning. When Christ links the *"Abomination of Desolation"* with his prophetic warning about the horrors coming upon Jerusalem and Judea, the timelines of one carry applications to the other.

In Daniel 9, the angel Gabriel reveals to Daniel that the captivity of his people would end 70 years after it began, just as Jeremiah had previously prophesied. Daniel may have imagined that the end of the captivity of his people would also be the end of their desolation. Gabriel however, reveals that there would be an additional 70 weeks of years during which Jerusalem, its temple, and the Jewish people would know more suffering and loss. Gabriel reveals more about the last seven years, the 70th week, than he does about the others. In the middle of this final seven years, desolation will come to the temple. The timeline for this desolation is confirmed in Dan 12:11 as occurring about 3 ½ years before the end of this 70th week.

Daniel and the Roman "Abomination of Desolation"

The Timeline

When Christ connects the *"Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet"* (Matt 24:15) to his prophetic warning regarding the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, certain conditions associated with the Abomination of Desolation provided in Daniel come to bear upon the fulfillment of Christ's words. These conditions in Daniel have implications for the view that Christ's prophecy in Matthew 24 and Mark 13 found their final fulfillment in the events of 70 A.D.

One cannot see the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in A.D. 70 as occurring during the final 70th week of Dan 9:27 (see the earlier discussion about Daniel 9). Yet the Abomination of Desolation spoken

of in Dan 9:27 and 12:11 does take place in the middle of this 70th week. The conditions found in Daniel 9 and 12 that accompany the Abomination of Desolation, come to bear as necessary conditions for the fulfillment of Christ's prophecy in Matt 24:15. This creates a discrepancy with the view that the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. was the fulfillment of Christ's words in Matthew 24 and its paralleled passages in Mark and Luke. The only way one can avoid the discontinuity is to disallow the numeric value of the 70 - 7's as representing their normal values. However, this was also explored earlier and was found contrary to the Daniel 9 context.

Conditions After

There is another implication that results from the connection Christ makes with *"the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet."* In Dan 9:24, Gabriel lists 6 conditions that will arrive after the 70th week is concluded. If the destruction of 70 A.D. took place during that 70th week, then those 6 conditions should have occurred within years of that destruction. But they did not. Some may argue that the 6 conditions are to be understood as part of the new life one may experience as the result of a new covenant relation with Christ. This question was also addressed in the earlier discussion on Daniel 9.

Summary of Parallel Consideration

The Passages Requires that Same Primary Fulfillment

The striking parallel features shared by Matthew, Mark, and Luke as they relate to Christ's prophetic discourse seem to require each passage to find its ultimate or 'target' fulfillment in the same series of events. The sameness of the passages makes it unlikely that these very similar prophetic passages should find ultimate fulfillment in different events. Since the passage in Matthew has Jesus referring to the Abomination of Desolation that Daniel prophesied, then this would seem to be the decisive element that identifies which temple defilement Christ was speaking about.

Luke 21 and the Events of 70 A.D.

Having said that, there are some aspects of Luke's account that seem reflective of the times during the siege and fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. It is hard, however, to apply all of the passage to these events. All three passages contain some elements that could be seen in the events of A.D. 70. Luke has the most. Yet, even these seemingly prior and later elements are intertwined with one another and then presented in a form that is paralleled between the gospels.

The parallel features shown above seem to strongly tie each passage to a united fulfillment called the Abomination of Desolation in Matthew and Mark. In the parallel of Luke, this position in the text is held by Gentile armies surrounding Jerusalem bringing desolation and vengeance "*in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*" The strong parallel features tie the 3 passages together, particularly where they intersect. The difficulty is that some of these intersecting events appear to be still future, and some (esp. Luke) seem in the broader context capable of resonating with a prior period.

Those units in Luke that seem to resonate in the campaign in A.D. 70 are interspersed throughout the passage with references to great celestial visions and terrestrial terrors. What does this mean for the rest of this passage in Luke? How do we treat those elements that refer to great celestial and terrestrial upheaval? These elements do not resonate with the events of A.D. 70. What about the elements of both groups that seem to be paralleled in Matthew or Mark where the central event is said to be the Abomination of Desolation? If there are elements in Luke that seem to resonate with the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in A.D. 70, must we also then see the Abomination of Desolation in Matthew and Mark as occurring at that time as well? Should we assign only specific sentences within the whole exclusively to a prior application, while leaving the rest to the later fulfillment? Since Christ is quoted in Matthew and Mark as referring to the Abomination of Desolation "*spoken of through Daniel the prophet,*" doesn't the broader prophetic context of Daniel come to bear upon the ultimate application of these passages?

Summary of Luke 21

On one hand, it is appropriate that the disciples' question about the

temple's destruction receive some reply in Christ's answer or the question would seem irrelevant and disconnected from the context. However, the strong parallel features between Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 in their respective passages argues against a completely separate application for any passage. Indeed, the strong parallel features in all three passages also would seem to argue against separate applications for any portion of these passages. What Matthew and Mark say, Luke pretty much says also. The differences complement each other. It is the slight differences at certain places that seem to cause Luke 21 to resonate with some events in A.D. 70. Yet these differences between the parallel passages are not so great as to break their parallel nature.

If Matthew does not refer to the destruction in 70 A.D., certainly this period of destruction could be seen as a foreshadowing of still future events. It was the same people that still would have a role to play. The Romans did, in fact, destroy the temple which to date has not been rebuilt. However, none of the 3 passages specifically say that temple destruction is part of Christ's prophecy.

Since Matthew, Mark and Luke are linked by their strong parallel features, the most consistent interpretation would find each passage's ultimate fulfillment in the same series of events. However, since the events of A.D. 70 did play a role in the temple destruction which was foretold by Christ and which prompted the disciples' questions beginning this prophetic discourse, and since the armies of the same people did surround Jerusalem, there does seem to be a strong resonance with their actions in 70 A.D.

Perhaps the best way to handle these seeming juxtapositions is to view the intertwined phrases and sentences in each presentation of Christ's discourse as having its ultimate or 'target' fulfillment in the time of the future desolation of a rebuilt temple, while also allowing that even though the events of A.D. 70 do not seem to be the primary 'target' of Christ's words, they may well have also been before him as he spoke.

The tribulation visited upon the Jewish people and their sacred places in 70 A.D. was horrific. Yet the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple does not seem to track with all the elements in the three

passages, including Luke. To be sure, there are many common elements of terrible suffering. But, enough is left unaddressed in the passages that an interpreter should hesitate before assigning the ultimate fulfillment of Christ's words to the historical reality of A.D. 70. We expect the fulfillment of a prophetic statement to fit with relatively tight tolerances. When the history of 70 A.D. is held up to the contents of the three passages and their connection with previous prophetic passages, gaps unexpectedly appear.

It is possible to see those events which appear to reflect A.D. 70 as also finding direct ultimate fulfillment in a still future time. While there are many elements, particularly in Luke's account, that seem to correlate well with the history of 70 A.D., there is nothing which prohibits these elements from occurring again. There is nothing that restricts any of the passages to a fulfillment in A.D.

70. Thus, we have similarities but no requirements that the texts be regarded as fulfilled. Not finding requirements in a prophetic text that absolutely restrict its fulfillment to a specific historical reality does not in itself mean that the text is not fulfilled in that historical reality. In this case, however, there are other interpretational factors which also suggest that the ultimate fulfillment of each passage is the same and remains still in the future.

Revelation 11

And a reed like a measuring rod was given to me, while it is being said, "You must arise and you must measure the shrine of God, and the altar, and the ones who are worshiping in it. But you must leave out the outside court of the shrine, and you must not measure it, because it was given to the Gentiles, and they will trample under foot the holy city 42 months. And I will give to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1260 days after they have clothed themselves with sack clothes."

Revelation 11:1-3 []*

The question of whether Revelation 11 has any connection to the future final week of Daniel 9 is not examined in this appendix. The issue was addressed in Chapter Two and those arguments need not be

revisited here. One's default position on whether the book of Revelation is past, future, or figurative certainly affects what applications are seen as legitimate for Revelation 11.

This examination assumes that Revelation 11 applies to future conditions. In particular, because of its many similar features with previous prophetic texts, it is taken to have the same fulfillment window as those other passages.

Defense of Temple Mount Sharing

If it can be demonstrated that there is a period of time between the outer temple courts being in Gentile control and the occupation of the city, a period during which worshipers are at the temple, then sharing of the temple mount is established. Two elements would be involved. The first is locating the status of the outer court and its control at the present time of the vision in Rev 11:1-3. The second is locating the time when the city and temple are occupied by Gentile forces. Knowing when these two conditions exist would be the key to determining if the temple mount is shared at some point.

To establish the present time of the vision, consideration is given to the verb tenses used to describe the events in Rev 11:12a. This permits a sequencing of these events that is then compared to other prophetic texts involving the temple prior to Christ's second coming. This locks down the relative time for the "*giving*" of the outer court to Gentile control. To establish the time of the Gentile occupation of Jerusalem, the verbs and events described in Rev 11:2b-3a are examined and also compared to relevant prophetic texts.

After performing the above examinations, we can put Jewish worshipers sacrificing in the temple up to the midpoint (Dan 9:27) of the final 7 years. We can also place the Gentile occupation of Jerusalem beginning at the midpoint (Luke 21 & Revelation 11). We have the outer court under Gentile control prior to the time of worship in the temple (Rev 11:1-3, John is twice told that he is forbidden from including it in his measurements of the temple). We have established that there is a period of time between the completed act of giving the outer court to the Gentiles and the large-scale occupation of Jerusalem. In the interval between these two events, there are Jewish

worshippers in the temple. This means that while there are Gentiles in the outer courts of the temple, there are also Jewish worshipers near the altar in the temple. Gentiles and Jewish worshipers will be on the temple mount at the same time.

Questions

What is the Extent of Sharing on the Temple Mount?

How far does this limited temple autonomy extend - to the temple and its practices only or also to the ground it stands on? Is there any real difference? Does limited authority to erect a temple, consecrate it, and worship at it, indicate enough control to say that the temple mount will be shared? Certainly, it will seem to have dual purposes during the period of the Jewish worship there, effectively making the temple mount shared in use and purpose, if not officially sanctioned.

Why Are Gentile Actions in Revelation 11 Separated by Years?

Next, comes the question of why an earlier and later Gentile involvement are placed in the same sentence of a prophetic statement. In Rev 11:2, the mention of Gentiles in connection with the outer court of the temple and the city of Jerusalem might lead the reader to think they are linked in time. However, we have seen that the one does not flow chronologically from the other even though one is described immediately after the other.

In the flow of Christ's commands to John in Rev 11:1-2, he has just instructed the Apostle to omit the outer court of the temple from his measurements. The reason given to John is that *"they have been given to the nations [Gentiles]."* However, lest John or his readers think that this future Gentile presence is limited to just the outer court, Christ explains that the Gentiles *"will tread under foot the holy city for 42 months."* Gentile involvement will not be limited to the outer court of the temple. They will occupy the city for 3 ½ years.

Gentile domination of Jerusalem is described immediately after the Gentile control of the outer temple court, not because there is a direct cause and effect or because one follows immediately after the other chronologically, but because both involve Gentile presence where they

would not be expected or desired.

This time-compressed description of Gentile presence in the temple must also be seen in the context of the chapter. The focus of the chapter is on the two witnesses who prophesy for 1260 days. Their activities and the response of the Antichrist are the primary focus in the chapter. The first 3 verses set the stage for these activities. So, overall inappropriate Gentile activity that actually spans many years, being expressed in one verse, is not inconsistent with this verse's purpose in the context of the chapter.

In Luke 4:16-30, we read of Jesus' return to the synagogue in his childhood village of Nazareth. He chose to read from Isaiah 61 but stopped after a verse and a half. After quoting the 1st half of v. 2 he said, *"Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."* To say that his former neighbors did not appreciate his message would understate their reaction. They tried to kill him.

Perhaps his message and actions thus far were not what they expected the Messiah to do at his coming. Yet Christ did declare that Isa 61:1-2a was fulfilled in their hearing. The rest of v. 2 would be fulfilled when the Messiah comes to save from oppression. Christ's first divine mandate was to provide salvation from sin. Only when the nation accepts him as such would the mandate in v. 2b be performed. Isa 61:2 contains two divine mandates for the Messiah that will be separated by time in their fulfillment. This is another example where two parts of the same verse in a prophetic statement are separated by a long interval of time. Rev 11:2 is, therefore, not unique in this respect.

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Is Control of the Outer Court an Element of the Gentile Occupation?

Some may contend that the control of the outer court by the Gentiles in Rev 11:2a is part of the Gentile occupation of Jerusalem mentioned in Rev 11:2b. Yet this poses problems. How is one to account for the presence of worshipers and the altar in the temple after the Gentile's occupation of the city?

Sacrifices are Taking Place After the Outer Court is Under Gentile Control

Daniel 9:27 informs us that sacrifices are halted midway through the final 7 years. After the midpoint, the temple knows desolation for the remainder of the 7 years. So, sacrifices take place prior to this midpoint only, not after. Since Rev 11:1 specifies that the altar and temple exist as of the present time of the vision, then this present time must be prior to the midpoint. The existence of the altar and worshipers in the temple locates the present time of the vision.

Gentile Occupation of Jerusalem Lasts to the End

Additionally, we have seen that the occupation of Jerusalem by the Gentiles lasts for 42 months (Rev 11:2). This occupation is also stated by Christ as continuing until *"the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"* (Luke 21:24). Assuming *"the times of the Gentiles"* lasts throughout the final 7 years, then we have both the beginning and ending time parameters. The occupation ends very near the end of the 7 years and begins 42 months prior. That the occupation occurs during the last half of the final 7 years, and the present time of the vision in Rev 11:1-3 is before that time, means that the outer court was placed under Gentile control before the occupation of Jerusalem began.

Is Control of the Outer Court the 1st Phase of the Gentile Occupation of Jerusalem?

Others may see the occupation of Jerusalem having an initial phase during which control extends up to, but not beyond the outer court of the temple. In a later phase, the occupation actually moves into the temple itself. However, such a view would seem to conflict with features found in Christ's own prophecy.

Gentile Occupation Occurs 42 Months Prior to the End

Rev 11:2b finds Christ telling John that the trampling of *"the holy city"* will last for 42 months. This still puts the beginning of the occupation at or after the midpoint of those final 7 years. Since the present time of John's vision in Revelation 11 finds the outer court already in Gentile control, and the present time is also prior to the midpoint, then the occupation of Jerusalem is separated from Gentile control over the outer court of the temple.

Why would the Occupation Not Extend into the Temple?

If the outer court is “*given*” to the Gentiles as part of the occupation of Jerusalem, then why are the inner courts not also mentioned in this way? If the Gentile occupation eventually leads to the Abomination of Desolation, and to the “*Man of Sin*” taking his seat in the temple of God (2 Thes), would we not also then expect the inner courts, including the altar and the shrine of the temple, to be desecrated when the outer courts are given to the Gentiles? However, that is not what Revelation 11 describes. Revelation 11 suggests that Gentiles and Jews are on the temple mount. Gentiles have some claim or authority to use over the outer court, while Jewish worshipers are at their temple.

The idea that the outer court is given over to the Gentiles as part of their occupation of Jerusalem while Jewish worshipers are in the temple with its altar seems inconsistent with the picture Christ presents in Luke 21. Luke 21:20 specifically designates the encirclement of Jerusalem by armies as one of the recognizable prophetic signals that should immediately send the inhabitants of Judea running away to the mountains. So suddenly does this come that the reader is explicitly warned not to go back into the city, but rather to flee from it. The context of Luke 21 portrays Christ as saying that with the arrival of these armies, life will change drastically. Enslavement and death are waiting for those who cannot or do not escape first. Yet, in the vision the altar and temple, which John is to measure in Rev 11:1, are accompanied by worshipers.

Gentile Control of Outer Court Completed Before Gentiles Occupy Jerusalem

The Gentiles trampling under foot in Luke 21 and Revelation 11 happens after the outer court has been given to the Gentiles and after a time in which John is informed via vision that the temple, altar, and worshipers exist. It seems reasonable to infer that giving of the outer court to the Gentiles must be a prior completed act before the Gentile armies surround Jerusalem. The prophetic time of the vision in Rev 11:1 is between these two Gentile involvements with the temple.

Summary of Temple Mount Sharing

That the temple mount will experience some shared usage between

Jewish worshipers and Gentiles, while strongly implied in the text of Rev 11:1-3, is demonstrated by revealing that the same conditions found in Rev 11:1-3 are indicated in various prophecies that have preceded it. These previous prophecies are found to corroborate the conditions on the temple mount when they are examined in detail and then compared. The conditions in one prophetic revelation limit the interpretive possibilities in others. When these implications are compared, the result is a much smaller range of interpretations, and among those still possible, most are not probable.

APPENDIX TWO

NEW LIFE FOR THE ROMAN EMPIRE, THE ANTICHRIST, OR BOTH?

There may be some who take issue with the way the proposed scenario interprets the beast's existence, absence, and coming again in Rev 17:8 & 11. Instead of viewing these prophetic motifs as applying to the one ruler who will dominate all, and have the full authority of the revived Roman rule in himself, some see them referring to the previous existence of Roman power, its current phase of dormancy, and its future re-awakening. They would see the "was, and is not, and will come" as referring to Roman power and influence, and not to the Antichrist himself. [[77](#)]

The Angel's Intended Message in Revelation 17:1-16

The intent of the angel is a major consideration in the question of whether the revival in Rev 17:8 refers directly to the entirety of the Roman rule. What the angel tells the Apostle John, and his reasons for disclosing it, form the immediate context that restrict all possible interpretations. In response to John's astonishment over the vision of the harlot being carried by the beast, the angel says to the Apostle:

Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

Revelation 17:7

The angel tells the Apostle that he will explain the mystery of the harlot and of the beast. The angel's purpose in explaining the beast is to go further and explain the mystery of its relationship with the harlot. Central to the angel's message are the beast's interactions with the harlot. Revelation 17 is not only about the beast or the harlot. If it was, only the beast or the harlot would have been featured in the

vision.

And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:3

And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh, and will burn her up with fire.

Revelation 17:16

The mystery the angel is explaining to the Apostle is not only how the harlot lived but also how she died. Some part of the harlot's life will be intertwined with that of the beast and her death will be at his hands. How this comes about is the mystery.

Revelation 17 is about the relationship of the beast and the harlot as they interact together, leading to the harlot's demise. Therefore, the angel's explanation, which begins in Rev 17:8, must fundamentally be about the underlying dynamics of this relationship during the future events recorded in vs. 8-13. Knowing this, we should be curious to know how the beast's absence and immanent re-emergence from the abyss in the future time of v. 8 aids in understanding this relationship.

If the existence, absence, and re-existence of the beast as told by the angel in v. 8 and v. 11 is interpreted as the absence of the Roman Empire's power on the world political scene, then we must ask if this interpretation really contributes to a greater understanding of the passage or the angel's message.

The Present Time References of Revelation 17:8-11

The second interpretational factor involves the time references in these sequences of verses. During his explanation of the vision, the angel places his own present time as narrator at different points chronologically. As events move forward in time, the angel discloses these forward movements of future history chronologically. The angel also places his present time at the same time as certain significant events within that chronological flow. By doing this, the angel allows his readers to enter into the time frame of these events and to

understand their chronological relationships to each other.

Beginning in Rev 17:8 the angel places his own present time at the same time as the most significant event in that verse. The angel highlights the most significant event in each of the 4 verses (17:8a, 8c, 10, 11) by placing his own present time at the same time as that important event. While this may sound confusing, it will be much easier to understand when we actually look at these verses in detail later. Still, any interpretation of Rev 17:8-13 must take into account the way the angel moves his own present time into the present times of vs. 8-11. Failure to account for the chronological connections in the angel's presentation of these verses can easily lead to misinterpretation and misapplication of Rev 17:8-13.

Alternate Interpretations & Applications of Revelation 17:1-16

Among those who regard the book of Revelation as largely being fulfilled in a future time, there are some who regard the literary presentations of Rev 17:8a, 8c, & 11 as a direct reference to the former dominating presence of the Roman Empire's rule, its dormancy for millennia, and its re-assembly during a future time. This second Appendix is an examination of various interpretations and applications of Rev 17:8-13 which hold that view.

To be clear, a revived rule of the Roman Empire's power is expected. It had an active period following the decline of the Greek Empire. It was responsible for the destruction of both Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. After eventually reaching the height of its projected power and influence, it declined and entered a dormant phase as other smaller powers gained strength in former Roman areas. Roman power will reassemble and rule again during the final events. However, seeing Rev 17:8-13 as the Roman Empire existing, not existing, and existing again, must confront and overcome multiple difficulties.

The First Alternate View of Revelation 17

The First Alternate View is what we will call the idea that Rev 17:8a & 8c must be directly applied to the Roman Empire's previous existence, dormancy, and future role in world affairs.

The beast which you saw was existing, and is not existing, and is about to ascend up from the abyss, and into destruction he goes.

Revelation 17:8a [*]

As they see the beast that was existing, and is not existing, and will come.

Revelation 17:8c [*]

The Problems with the First Alternate View of Revelation 17

While a future fulfillment for the book of Revelation, especially from 4:1 to the end, appears to be the most consistent application of the governing interpretive principles (historical grammatical hermeneutic), the First Alternate's interpretation of vs. 8 & 11 as found above, encounters several significant difficulties when we examine the text closely. [[78](#)]

The Problem with Verse 8's Present Time

The first obstacle that must be overcome is that v. 8 indicates that the beast is absent in the present time of the verse.

And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:3

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns."

Revelation 17:7

The beast which you saw, was existing, and is not existing, and is about to ascend up from the abyss, and into destruction he goes, and all those who are dwelling on the earth will marvel whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, as they see the beast that was existing, and is not existing, and will appear.

Revelation 17:8 [*]

John sees the beast in vs. 3 and 7, but in v. 8 that beast is gone. This

would indicate that the present time of Rev 17:8 does not occur at the same time as vs. 3 & 7.

The form of the beast which the Apostle sees in his vision of 17:3 is correctly regarded by futurists as a form of the revived Roman rule. John's vision in v. 3 and the angel's promise to explain it in v. 7, are from a time perspective in which that Roman power has already been restored. However, as the angel begins to explain the mystery of this beast and the harlot, he says twice in v. 8 that the beast is *currently* absent.

The beast that you saw, was and is not ...

Revelation 17:8a

If the beast is assumed to be the Roman Empire in total, then clearly, the present time of v. 8 cannot be the same as, nor flow from v. 7. If the beast in Rev 17:8 is the total Roman rule that was existing, went dormant, and re-emerges in the end-times, then v. 8 must be regarded as having its present time before vs. 3 & 7.

This is a problem for the First Alternate View because the beast's absence occurs after it has achieved the 7-headed & 10horned configuration. The beast with heads and horns is generally thought to represent the structure of Roman power *after* its dormancy. Yet Rev 17:8 seems to indicate that Roman power reawakened *before* the beast's absence in that verse.

To be clear, Roman power will be re-awakened. Yet this is not what Rev 17:8 is about. Those who view Rev 17:8 as the angel's prediction of the dormant and re-emerging phases of the Roman Empire must convincingly address the angel's use of the present tense to indicate the assumed absence of Roman power. One cannot hold to the interpretation that the absence of the beast referred to in Rev 17:8 is the dormant phase of Roman power while still maintaining that the present time period of v. 8 is the same as or follows after the time period of vs. 3 & 7.

Dormancy is Irrelevant to the Initial and the Ultimate Readers

Neither at the time of John's reception of the vision and the angel's explanation, nor at the future time at which the angel places his own

present time period, is the Roman rule dormant. When the Apostle John was exiled to the island of Patmos where he wrote his prophetic work, the Roman Empire was in full control of its territory. At the future time when the harlot interacts with the beast with 7 heads and 10 horns, Roman rule is already reestablished. So, in neither John's time period, nor in the time period of the angel, is the Roman rule absent, even though v. 8 is assumed to declare twice that Rome's power is absent.

This is not insignificant. Why would the angel place his own present time at the same time that the Roman power was absent? What relevance does this absence have to the meaning of the passage or the angel's intent in the chapter? Why would the angel highlight the phase of dormancy? Rome would exert no influence during this period. Rome as a political force is non-existent. Yet, viewing the absences in Rev 17:8 as the dormant phase of Roman power, finds the angel emphasizing the very period when Rome is not weak, but irrelevant in world affairs. The angel would be highlighting the only period when Rome could not have any relationship with the harlot. This implication seems to take us further away from the angel's stated intention of explaining the relationship between the harlot and the beast.

A Modified First Alternate View of Revelation 17

The only solution to the conflict of the time perspectives, if one is insistent upon viewing the absence in Rev 17:8 as the dormant phase of Roman rule, is to locate the present time of v. 8 before the time period of vs. 1-7. By assuming that the angel is starting his explanation of the harlot and the beast prior to the beast's arrival on the political scene, in theory, one might be able to resolve the conflicting time periods. However, placing the present time of v. 8 prior to Rev 17:1-7 presents other problems.

The Whiplash Effect with the Modified First Alternate View

The first problem created by viewing the present time period of Rev 17:8 as prior to the time of vs. 1-7, is the whiplash effect it would produce in the reader. Verses 1-7 would have their own present time period after the re-assembly of Roman rule, as indicated by the

existence of the beast in these verses. Verse 8 must then jump backward in time to a period before Rome's power is re-established. The unnatural whiplash effect produced by locating v. 8 prior to the restoration of Roman power, aside from being extremely awkward, still does not seem to have any connection with the angel's explanation of the mystery of the harlot interacting with the beast.

Predating Revelation 17:8a Contradicts its Own Context

Worse yet for this view are the contradictions it creates with the context. In the same sentence where the angel states that the beast is absent in present time, he also directly ties the existence of the beast to the present time of John's vision. In Rev 17:3 John sees the beast and the woman sitting upon it. In Rev 17:8a the angel tells John, "*The beast which you saw, was, and is not ...*" Rev 17:8a seems to indicate that the beast John saw carrying the woman is now absent. The way the angel phrases v. 8a certainly seems to be a forward flow of time from v. 3 through at least v. 8, because the beast John saw is the beast that is absent. This wording of Rev 17:8a would seem to make the predating of v. 8a at odds with itself.

The Shared Structure of vs. 8 & 11 in Revelation 17

Another problem created when the present time of v. 8 is located prior to vs. 1-7 is the strong parallel structure that v. 8 shares with v. 11. Both vs. 8 and 11 state that the beast existed in past time, and then does not exist in present time. The strong parallel elements shared between vs. 8 and 11 would tend to confirm for the reader that these verses are describing the same events. If that is true, which seems to be the force of the literary usage, then it would be necessary to place the present time of v. 11 also prior to the re-establishment of Roman rule.

A Re-Modified First Alternate View of Revelation 17

Since both vs. 8 and 11 share the same language, then both verses would have to be located on the timeline prior to the events described in Rev 17:1-7, 9-10, 12-13. One must also ignore the seeming contradiction v. 8a contains to this chronological rearrangement, and the continuing dissonance caused by having the angel highlight the

time when Rome could have no influence on world affairs and no relationship of any kind with the harlot.

The Double Whiplash Effect with Re-Modified First Alternate View

However, the reader's sensation of chronological whiplash is now doubled as he is pulled back (v. 8), pushed forward (vs. 9-10), pulled back (v. 11), and pushed forward again (vs. 12-13). He is ripped back from the flow of events in vs. 1-7 to the prior time period of v. 8. Then the reader is pushed forward again into the original chronological flow of events in vs. 9-10, only to be ripped back in time to the events of v. 11. Finally, he is pushed forward into the original chronological flow of events in vs. 12-13. This disjointed chronology is extremely unnatural, and not how language normally functions. It also hardly seems to fit with the angel's overall message. The flow of time is usually assumed to be linear, consistent and moving only forward in time unless otherwise indicated by the text.

The Shared Parallel Structure of vs. 8 & 11 in Revelation 17

Placing Rev 17:11 prior to the re-establishment of Roman power, because of its shared literary structure and language, creates other problems. In v. 11, the phrase that indicates a reemergence refers to events that are strongly linked to post-reconstituted Roman rule. The beast itself is said to also be an 8th king, who is one of the 7 prior kings. Some futurists may go so far as to say that the former existence of the Roman Empire displayed 7 stages of "kings." However, the angel tells us that in its future relationship with the harlot, the re-established Roman Empire will have an 8th king, whose time period is after the re-establishment of Roman power. Thus, the literary similarity of v. 11 with v. 8 would require both to be located prior to the re-establishment of Roman power, even though v. 11 itself contains indications that the reemergence they are both addressing are after Rome's reestablished authority.

The Re-Modified Chronology Conflicts with Revelation 17:8 & 11

There may be some who would contend that the angel begins his explanation in v. 8 and following, and he, therefore, begins his explanation before the time frame seen in vs. 1-7. The content of v. 8a,

however, seems to dismiss this assumption. The angel's words direct John's attention to what he has just seen and focus them on what happens next.

The beast which you saw, was, and is not, and is about to ascend up from the abyss ...

Revelation 17:8a [*]

The angel's own words in v. 8a seem to eliminate predating this verse before the time of vs. 1-7.

Those who may contend that v. 9ff is the beginning of a predated explanation still must also overcome v. 11's direct ties to post-revival political events.

And the beast which was existing, and is not existing, is himself also an eighth, and is out of the 7 ...

Revelation 17:11 [*]

The Second Alternate View of Revelation 17:8-11

To preserve the theory that the absence and reappearance in Revelation 17 refer to the dormancy and reassembly of Roman power as a whole, some credible way must be found to reconcile the absence in the present time of Rev 17:8 & 11 with the fact that their context seems to place the time of these verses *after* Rev 17:1-7, 9-10a. One way to do this would be to contend that the vision of the beast in vs. 1-7 would have to be located during the time before the old Roman power went dormant. This view could locate the angel's statement of the 7th king's pending arrival in v. 10 within the pre-dormant phase of Roman power. Yet, this also has many difficulties to overcome.

No Historical Evidence for 10 Regions in Rome's Past

To maintain that the beast with 7 heads and 10 horns, who also carries the harlot, was a form of the pre-dormant phase of Roman power would require historical examples of how Rome's structure and actions in its previous existence were consistent with the description the angel gives it in vs. 3 & 7.

Some have thought they found 7 stages of Roman power. This would

seem to reflect the sequential nature of Rev 17:10. However, maintaining that the 7-headed & 10-horned beast was part of the pre-dormant Roman rule would require that the 10 horns also be satisfactorily found in Rome's past in a manner consistent with how Scripture itself regards multi-horned political regimes. So, we must ask, when in Rome's history has its structure been even remotely similar to that of Rev 13:1, Rev 17:3 or 17:7 in that Rome had 10 kingdoms or regions exercising their authority simultaneously and autonomously?

To date, no proposal has been fully developed and successfully advanced which finds in Rome's past, convincing elements consistent with how other scriptural examples of similarly described dominant powers exhibited their fulfillment. So far, Roman history has failed to produce a historically based scenario in which 10 areas of power simultaneously exercised some limited sovereignty in fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel chapter 7.

No Historical Evidence of the Harlot in Rome's Past

If one maintains that the beast of Rev 17:3 & 7 is to be found in the pre-dormant phase of the Roman rule, then what is the harlot? If the 7-headed & 10-horned beast is to be found in Rome's past, then the harlot who rides this beast cannot be left in the future. The harlot rides the beast, so they both must be in existence at the same period of time. Where one places the time of the 7-headed & 10-horned beast, one must also place the harlot. But if one imagines that the 6 or 7 stages of Roman rule in its pre-dormant phase satisfy the model of the beast seen in Rev 17:3 & 7, where is the suitable comparative model of the harlot that rides this beast - a harlot who makes the world's inhabitants "*drunk by the wine of her immorality*"?

As Chapter Seven discusses, the "*great harlot*" should be regarded as an apostate form of a formerly genuine worship. Consistency with the biblical image of harlotry requires a people who had a formal relationship with God which was later replaced with an apostate form. Some may claim the City of Rome, which directly benefitted from the empire's wealth and influence, was the "*great harlot*" to which the angel was referring. However, as Chapter Seven demonstrates, this

view is lacking an important element.

The Third Alternate View of Revelation 17:8-11

A third view needs to be addressed. The Empires interpretation sees the 7 heads of the beast as past empires during Israel's history. They are generally identified as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Ancient Rome, and Revived Rome. While the Empires view does not necessarily take a direct position on the existence, absence, and re-existence in Rev 17:8 & 11, it does have a significant following. Since other interpretations have been examined in this chapter, it seems a good place to briefly introduce and discuss it. (The Empires view has already been introduced in the endnotes and it will appear in additional notes going forward.)

Empires View: The Beast's Heads Represent Gentile Empires

Under the Empires interpretation, the 7 heads of the beast represent past empires. A significant problem for this view is the complete lack of contextual support. There is no support in Revelation 13 or 17 for viewing the 7 heads as ancient empires. On the contrary, the events revealed in these chapters seem to all happen about the same time.

And they are seven kings, the five fell, the one is, the other did not yet come, and when he comes it is required that he remain a little.

Revelation 17:10 [* with emphasis]

Empires View: So, Just What "Fell" in Revelation 17:10?

Some may look to the Greek term ἔπεσαν - "fell" in Rev 17:10 for support. For empires to follow one another, the previous one must "fall." On the surface, this verb seems to point towards a ruinous defeat with all the disruption and chaos that would follow such a "fall." The Empires view seems to depend on the verb in Rev 17:10 meaning something more than the end of ruling authority for the 5 kings.

When speaking of ancient rulers, it was true that their "fall" likely involved defeat and death. However, even though the prophecies in the book of Revelation are ancient, Rev 17:10 will be fulfilled in the

future. Thankfully, more and more nations are governed by elected leaders who are given authority for a fixed length of time. If the prophecy of Rev 17:10 is aimed at 5 elected or appointed rulers, then there would be a known end to their time in authority. The ruler lives on afterward, but without governing power.

So, what exactly “*fell*”? Must we anticipate 5 defeated kings or empires? Could Rev 17:10 instead pertain to appointed or elected officials who will cease to possess governing authority after their terms end? If so, the power to rule “*fell*” and not necessarily the individual himself. Then why is the word “*fell*” used at all in Rev 17:10? The short answer is because Dan 7:20 uses such a verb.

There are a number of striking similarities between Rev 17:10 and Dan 7:20. Both verses appear in passages that describe the activities of a beast with 10 horns. In both verses an angel is describing the loss of power for a group of rulers using a verb that means “to fall.” The angel speaking in Rev 17:10 wanted to tie his explanation to the one given by another angel in Dan 7:20.

The permanent loss of ruling power found in the context of Dan 7:20 should be brought forward and applied to the 5 kings in Rev 17:10. What “falls” in Rev 17:10 is the kings’ power. Some may feel the verb “to fall” requires the ruler’s death. While this may have been how ancient people read these prophecies, the fulfillment is not tied to how they were regarded over time.

The Empires view has only one potential contextual anchor and that is the verb πίπτω - “to fall” in Rev 17:10. Yet the permanent loss of ruling power does not seem to require the verb to mean a loss of life or defeat of a political regime. However, without this, the Empires view loses the last element in the context that seems to offer support.

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The context of Revelation 13 gives no hint to the past roots of the beast aside from what we can deduce from its appearance in the vision. Revelation 17 describes the beast’s appearance the same way, but also with interactions between its own elements, and with the harlot.

The Harlot Sits upon All 7 Heads of the Beast at the Same Time

Revelation 17:9 poses problems for those who view the 7 heads of the beast as past empires (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Ancient Rome, Revived Rome). Rev 17:9 states that the harlot sits upon the 7 heads of the beast. The Greek verb for “sits” is in the present tense.

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains where the woman sits upon them, and they are seven kings.

Revelation 17:9-10a [*]

The angel’s description of the woman sitting upon the 7 hills is in the Greek present tense. This would seem to represent a contemporary type of activity. The use of the Greek present tense in v. 9 strongly suggests that the harlot is sitting upon all 7 rulers simultaneously. This makes it difficult to understand v. 9 as only indicating the kings were supporting the woman consecutively, one after the other.

Mountains have been associated with governing powers in the Old Testament. The problem is that the same woman is said to sit upon all of them. To follow the above Empires interpretation, the same institution represented by the harlot would have to be supported by each of the 7 empires. History has shown that ruling powers have used religious practices to justify their actions and pacify their subjects. Yet, this woman called “*Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots*” seems to represent more than state sponsored religious cults, and her crimes seem limited to the Christian era.

And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

Revelation 17:6a

Does a strong historically verifiable link to the same religious cult exist in all 6 past empires? The harlot is more than state sponsored religious cults. It is named as the one institution that rests upon each of the seven heads. Just as the 10 horns are contemporary with each other, so the tense of the verb in v. 9 seems to justify seeing the 7 horns or kings as contemporaries also.

The Empires View Conflicts with Daniel 7

Daniel 7 focuses on the 4th empire to dominate Israel. This 4th empire has ancient roots and according to Daniel 7 & 9 will accomplish events not known to past history. The 4th beast of Daniel 7 is the last Gentile empire, but the Empires interpretation divides it into its 6th, 7th, and 8th empires. According to the Empires view, the 6th empire would be ancient Rome and the 7th would be revived Rome. The 8th ruler of v. 11, which is *“out of the seven,”* is the Antichrist and his regime.

Unfortunately, the Empires view divides the 4th and last empire of Daniel 7 between the last two of its 7 empires. In Daniel 7 we are presented with 4 creatures that an angel interprets as the next 4 empires to trouble Israel, followed by the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Yet, under the Empires view, the 4th empire or beast of Daniel 7 is associated with two different empires - the 6th & 7th. The dissonance produced by this difference is a weakness for the Empires interpretation. Daniel 7 shows no other worldly powers after the 4th empire. The biblical text shows the 4th beast of Daniel 7 from its inception through to its final judgment by God (Dan 7:26-27). If the 4th beast of Daniel 7 is the last Gentile empire, why does the Empires interpretation divide it into the 6th, 7th, and even 8th empires?

If the Empires view is correct, then the 7-headed & 10-horned beast of Revelation 13 & 17 must have a divided significance. The 10 horns represent Daniel's understanding, and the 7 heads represent another significance altogether. Daniel does not speak of any beast representing all empires that troubled Israel. In Daniel, each empire is always represented by its own creature.

The Empires View Conflicts with Revelation 13:3

Revelation 13:3 informs the reader that one of the 7 heads of the beast suffers a fatal wound and then recovers. This is a problem for the Empires view. If the heads of the beast are empires, then the wounding and recovery must reflect a wounding and recovery of an empire. Some attribute the wounding and recovery to the decline of Roman power and to its eventual reemergence during the end-times. However, the structure of the beast in Rev 13:3 directly conflicts with the Empires view. Ancient Rome is considered to be the 6th empire,

and the future revived Roman system the 7th empire. Yet the wounded and recovered head of Revelation 13 is only one head, not two.

Some may contend that the wounded head represents the Antichrist as the 8th empire, and this preserves the Empires interpretation. We would agree that the Antichrist is the wounded head. However, Rev 13:3 only shows 7 heads, not 8. The wounded and recovered head must be one of these 7. Therefore, the Empires interpretation seems inconsistent with the view that the wounded and recovered head in Rev 13:3 represents Rome's decline and revival.

Then what does the wounded head represent under the Empires interpretation? That the fatally wounded head is given new life is confirmed by the vocabulary and context of Revelation 13. If the wounded and resurrected head does not represent the decline and revival of Roman power in totality, then it must represent the decline and revival of another empire. However, none of the remaining 5 candidates can fill that role. Neither Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, or Greece declined with a "*fatal wound*" that "*has been healed*." None of these 5 empires collapsed and rose again. Yet, this is required if one of the 7 heads is fatally wounded and recovers.

If the wounded and recovered head does not correspond to past empires and cannot correspond to the Roman Empire, then either the interpretation of the wounding and recovery of the head is inaccurate, or the Empires view itself fails to explain what is happening in the text regarding the heads of the beast. The vocabulary in Rev 13:3 is rather dramatic in that a death and revival from death is portrayed. The flow of events in the following verses confirms that this dramatic event initiates sweeping changes for the beast. The burden of proof, therefore, remains with those who would promote the Empires view. The Empires view must be able to adequately explain how the wounding and recovery of one of the 7 heads of the beast involves one, and only one of the empires, in a way that is recognizable from history or other prophecy. If it cannot, then the most generally accepted interpretation applied to the 7 heads of the beast, by those inclined to hold a position, finds its foundational interpretive dynamic undercut, leaving the Empires view lacking further merit.

The Empires View Has More Tradition than Biblical Support

The supposed ties to past Gentile empires is absent from the specific texts where the 7-headed & 10-horned image is found. The Empires interpretation finds no direct support in the texts of Revelation 13 or 17. As such, an interpretation is advanced which finds no supporting evidence in the immediate, local and extended contexts of Revelation where the image of the beast appears. The lack of direct support in the same texts where the 7 heads of the beast are mentioned poses a significant difficulty for those seeking to maintain the Empires view.

To be certain, Revelation 17 is one of the most difficult chapters to interpret in the already difficult Book of Revelation. Finding an interpretation which covers the seemingly conflicting indications in this chapter is trying. Over time, those interpretations that had the least difficulties gained prominence over rivals. Interpretations of troublesome passages received greater acceptance if they were authored or supported by serious well trained biblical scholars, many of whom were the well-respected, even esteemed teachers of today's well trained biblical scholars.

Prominence of an interpretation often leads to tradition as it passes from one generation to the next. [[80](#)] Yet the difficulties of these 'traditional' interpretations must eventually be examined and resolved or the interpretations must be discarded. Commentators of Revelation 17 may present the Empires view as one most often held by those strongly inclined to a particular interpretation. However, most wisely refrain from taking a position themselves since the intricate nature of the chapter seems to require a more comprehensive explanation. The Empires view has its adherents, but it also has many obstacles.

Summary of Alternative Interpretations and Applications

The angel says he will explain the mystery. Yet, viewing v. 8 as happening before vs. 1-7 makes everything less clear, not more understandable. If v. 8 happens during or after vs. 1-7, then more light is found, but the alternate interpretation must give way. Rev 17:8 is not referring to the existence, absence, and re-emergence of Roman rule. By the time of v. 8 Roman power has been reestablished and is interacting with the harlot of vs. 1-7.

The Empires view also begins to reveal its faults. The position that the 7 heads of the beast represent 7 empires that followed one another, increasingly encounters problems.

The Problem of Unavoidable Subjectivity

The book of Revelation seeks to tell its own message, and we desire to hear it. Listening carefully to the text of Scripture is the goal for everyone who seeks the truth, and coming to the text with presuppositions is unavoidable. However, coming to the text with predetermined outcomes in mind hinders us from seeing the message of this rich book and its passages with all the light that is available.

Since we all have 'blind spots' in our search of the Scriptures, we must adopt an eagerness to discuss our different understandings without hostility. It is very likely that over time each of us will be found wrong in some things, while possibly correct in others. If we are serious about finding the truth, then open discussions without contentiousness can be not only helpful but healthy.

The Beast's Changed Structure is the Clue to the Harlot's Fate

The configuration of the beast that supported the harlot was as the 7-headed & 10-horned system. The configuration of the beast which intentionally destroys the harlot is that of the beast along with the 10 horns. The angel describes these specific changes in the development of the beast to explain the change in relationship to the harlot. In Rev 17:1-7, the configuration of the beast operating at that time actively supports the harlot and is represented by the beast carrying her. In Rev 17:16, the configuration of the beast operating then destroys the harlot. The angel's message in Rev 17:8-13ff is to describe the changes within Rome's governing structure that would precipitate the change in its relationship with the harlot, leading to her demise.

Any successful interpretation of the existence, absence, and re-existence of the beast in Rev 17:8-13 must incorporate the angel's reason for describing its changed attitude towards the harlot, in which the beast moves from active support to active destruction. Those who see the existence, absence, and re-existence in Rev 17:8 as the rule, dormancy, and reassembly of the Roman Empire must successfully

incorporate the beast's drastically changed attitude towards the harlot.

There Will Be a Roman Rule Awakened from its Long Dormancy

Roman power will be revived from its dormant phase to again dominate the world. For those living during the fulfillment of Rev 17:1-7, this will be an accomplished historical fact. Just how long the revived Roman rule will have existed before it forms the 7-headed & 10-horned configuration described in Rev 17:1-7 is not clear. What is clear from the prophetic messages in Daniel 7 and Rev 17:8-13 is that this reestablished Roman power will undergo developmental and structural changes. These transformations allow changes in attitudes toward the harlot to surface among those holding authority in the beast, and will be the motivation for the beast's destructive actions against the harlot by the time of Rev 17:16.

Roman Dormancy Will Be Irrelevant to Future Readers

That the Roman power would experience a dormant phase and then be re-assembled in the final days with greater strength would not be a mystery to those living during the time of vs. 1-7. Those living during these events could see Rome's re-emergence in their past history. The only ones who would have some interest in a prophetic statement about Rome's re-assembled power are those living during its dormant phase. It is only for us, living in this dormancy, that a statement of Roman re-establishment holds some fascination. Those who will be living during the unfolding of end time events will not be fascinated with the historical fact that Rome exists again. They will instead, be interested to know how this revived Roman power will act. The angel's explanation of the mystery, the changed relationship between the harlot and the beast, while for us, is not aimed at us. The angel's explanation is primarily aimed at those who will endure the days of its fulfillment.

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EXPANDED PREFACE

Why Choose This Title and Topic?

In the spring and early summer of 2004, I became increasingly intrigued by the seemingly self-contained enigma of Revelation 17:7-11.

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.

I worked with these five verses over the next nine years. In the book that follows, you will find not only a new interpretation of these verses but also its implication for other biblical prophetic texts. These Biblical passages, when considered in their context, identify the Antichrist from his earliest deeds, his place in the changing structure of the world's future governing authority, and his final rise to complete religious and ruling power on earth.

Why Are We Told About the Future?

The Bible's prophecies consistently reinforce God's sovereignty. When history unfolds just as these prophecies predicted, we are reminded that history has an Author and Director. Fulfilled prophecy also

demonstrates the reliability of the Bible. As future events come to pass just as the biblical record prophesied, the Scriptures are shown to be reliable and accurate. Biblical prophecy also plays an especially important role during the time of its fulfillment. Prophesied events are many times fulfilled during turbulent chaotic periods of history. When stability seems uncertain or lost, these prophecies remind us that God is in control.

Prophecies about important events are not usually delivered once. These significant future events are revealed by different biblical authors over time. What may have been only hinted at in a previous prophecy is often revealed with more specific information later, building anticipation in readers throughout history. The progressive nature of prophetic revelation also permits the reader to observe the same future event from the different perspectives of the human authors, giving a more complete picture.

How Are Biblical Prophecies to Be Understood?

When we are attempting to understand any biblical statement, whether prophetic or otherwise, our goal is to determine the author's intended meaning in that passage. Scripture will not have a meaning that is different from what its authors were intending to say. Both the Divine and human authors communicated through the medium of language, which touches both the literary context of the passage and the historical context in which the message was created. Since every language is an integral component of the culture in which it is used, the historical context of the human author must be considered. This includes important cultural and societal factors that influenced the way the author saw himself, his world and his place in that world. To the degree we are able to enter into the cultural and social setting of the author, the better we will see how that author saw the meaning of his own words and the message they are meant to convey. This process rarely happens easily and never perfectly, but it is an essential part in understanding the author's intended meaning.

When we are considering the literary context, careful attention must be given to the specific words that comprise the message. The words must be understood in the normal way that the language worked. The

words, clauses, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and sections all influence the meaning of each other. The type of literature must be considered. Also, prophetic messages need to be considered in light of other such prophecies.

The correct understanding of prophetic messages *does not depend upon an individual's personal interpretation*. If an understanding of a particular prophetic message is confirmed by others, then it is more likely to stand the tests of time. Those committed to the authoritative nature of Scripture comprise the community best able to confirm the understanding of a particular biblical message. So, while an understanding of a prophetic statement may initially arise from the study of one individual, the new understanding must eventually receive the considered judgment of this larger community before it should be accepted as approaching the biblical authors' intended meaning.

This process may take considerable time. New or novel interpretations must not be received by the community of believers without strict review and careful consideration. They must not surrender too quickly what they received from preceding generations and faithfully guarded. Even still, we must recognize that our understanding of the Scriptures is not static. There is a dynamic quality to our understanding of God's Word, that is the result of intense interaction and growing intimacy with the sacred writings.

We need to remember that the Scriptures themselves do not err, but our understanding of them often can. Revising our collective understanding is not a rejection of the Scriptures themselves. The process of refinement proceeds from the recognition that we are all finite and fallible.

It is our profound responsibility to always try to discover the biblical author's intended message. While this may often leave us with more questions than answers, we cannot presume to restrict the author's message to a more manageable dynamic that seems to fit our assumptions at the moment. If all we can pass along to succeeding generations are more precisely defined *unanswered* questions, then we must be content to have filled that role. It may not be our

generation's task to answer those questions. The frustration this tends to generate must not be permitted to re-frame the author's intended message into something we believe we can answer now. [1]

At the same time, we must not shy away from trying to discover that message, even if it means crossing over a boundary possibly erected upon mistaken, misguided or incomplete past attempts at successful interpretation. [2] These boundaries are not the author's message, but past attempts to understand his intentions. Therefore, arriving at the intended message may involve crossing the boundaries of past incomplete attempts and laying down new interim boundaries that are considered more in tune with the message of the author. These new interim boundaries may be redrawn later as following generations more precisely acquire the author's intention.

The boundaries move because our knowledge is not perfect. Yet, possessing incomplete knowledge does not mean we know nothing for certain. Our imperfect knowledge about the author's intended message is valuable, extremely so. As our understanding of the biblical message expands the boundaries between the known and unknown move.

What Issues Were Considered When Constructing This Book?

After examining a particular prophetic statement in light of its immediate context, related prophetic statements, and the larger issues that the Scriptures communicate, how does the individual place his results before the community of believers for their evaluation? Should he present his interpretation in part or in the whole? Should he provide a comprehensive examination, including his conclusions as to its effects on other aspects of the greater prophetic message? Or should he provide a series of more narrowly focused presentations?

The individual must also grapple with the issue of who among the community should be targeted to hear his conclusions. Those members of the community who have training and expertise in serious biblical studies should obviously be among those targeted. Yet those committed to biblical authority are not restricted to the expertly trained. Does the individual have an obligation to the community as a

whole if he seriously believes his study of a prophetic statement may contribute to their appreciation of the biblical message? The individual may be aware that profitable study by biblical scholars is not always driven by their own curiosity, but may be brought for eventual evaluation from outside their immediate interests.

In addition to considering the scope of his presentation and his target audience, the individual must consider the ramifications of the prophetic statement, as he understands it. Is there an urgent nature to the prophetic message? Are there potential negative results that might arise from a delay in making his presentation to the committed community? If so, what means are available to the individual to stimulate the community's interest, thereby initiating its collective review? These issues were all weighed against each other when the scope, audience, and nature of this presentation were decided.

There seemed to be a need to weave a more comprehensive scenario out of the threads that developed from a new understanding of Rev 17:8-11. There are multiple implications arising from this new understanding of the prophecy. Presenting these implications seemed just as important as relating the new understanding itself. Certainly, this is not without risk. If an aspect of the newer understanding is found to be inaccurate, then the supposed implications are likely to also be inaccurate. Having placed a scenario of events before the reader based upon the direct and implied results of the newer understanding of the prophecy, the discovery of a flawed aspect would damage not only that part of the newer understanding, but invalidate swaths of the proposed scenario, leaving its value to the community greatly diminished if not entirely eroded.

What is in this Book?

Every non-fiction author assumes he has something worth reading. Among his readers, he hopes many will be curious enough to persevere to the end of the book. However, curious readers do not all expect the same things. Most readers are interested in *what* and *when*. While others are also interested in the *why* and *how*. *What* and *when* are usually the end product. They are the results of his investigations. If the writer is to be successful in changing minds, he

must also demonstrate *why* his *when* and *what* are valid, which means he must demonstrate *how* he arrived at them. But not all readers care about the process or proof of validity. Explaining the *why* and *how* would leave some readers over-burdened. While including only the *when* and *what* would leave others feeling empty. What to do? Some readers are likely to be disappointed no matter what the author includes. If he can't avoid disappointing some, who should the writer disappoint least?

Given the nature of the proposed scenario, this book leans toward providing more explanation. Since there may be elements of the proposed scenario that some might find extraordinary, erring on the side of too much explanation seemed more forgivable than erring with too little.

The heart of the proposed scenario has been distilled into 7 key paragraphs. They contain the basic implications arising from a new understanding of Revelation 17:8-11. Each key paragraph is followed by at least one chapter devoted to its underlying supporting arguments. Some paragraphs are examined in two chapters. The discussion continues in the endnotes where important aspects of the scenario are compared with positions held by others. There are two appendices. These contain even further discussions of material presented in some chapters.

When I have supplied my own translation of the biblical text the abbreviation [*] follows the reference.

What is Not in this Book?

While we are curious to know when these momentous prophetic events are to begin, the Scriptures seem to ignore our curiosity. Instead, the Bible consistently focuses on *the what*. Of the two, *when* and *what*, the most important, of course, is *what*. If we know *what* will happen in the future *when* becomes unnecessary. If the prophesied events have not happened, the Scriptures' answer to the question of *when* seems to be 'not yet.' If these events are already happening, the answer is 'now.' This seems to be as far as the Scriptures are willing to satisfy our desire to know *when*.

Yet many have attempted to identify specific dates when prophetic events are to occur. Some have relied upon supposed 'codes' found among the letters that make up the biblical message. Others have tried to tie the unfolding of future prophecies to key dates or events in recent history. Still others, have predicted the start of the prophetic end by calculations of 'significant' numbers. Among the many flaws in these methods is a lack of reliance upon the biblical authors' intended message.

The Scriptures are a precious treasure preserved for us by God through real persecution and suffering. They were never intended to be a database of letters that could be sifted and repeatedly aligned until something of assumed coherence 'pops up.' Such 'findings' could also be achieved by sifting and aligning the works of Shakespeare or any other large grouping of words.

The method used when handling the Bible must be based upon what the authors thought they were saying. While the Divine author of Scripture may have intended some words to bear more meaning than the human authors were aware, this Divinely intended message is found to be complementary, not contrary, to the intent of the human hand that wrote it. Some may disagree with what I believe the authors of Scripture were intending to say, but I trust we can agree that the principle of authorial intent is the necessary foundation for biblical interpretation.

Since the authors of Scripture did not indicate at what date these future events would begin, we sacrifice credibility by going past such omissions to create 'start times' of our own. The prophetic authors did specify that certain events would occur with or near other future key events. But no specific date is given for any of them. Every reader must be content to understand the prophecy as accurately as possible while waiting for these key events to occur in the course of history. Readers looking for dates in history when these prophetic events will occur will be disappointed. There are no specific dates or 'Bible codes' in this book.

Who Helped Make this Book Possible?

I am greatly indebted to Fred Plastow. His passion, insatiable curiosity

and keen intellect were all brought to bear when he graciously agreed to review a rather impenetrable very rough early draft. His 20 pages of observations and suggestions helped lay the groundwork for this book's current format. His contribution was crucial to this project moving forward.

I am also very thankful for David Hudson's thorough review and many suggestions. Being a gifted writer, David patiently tried to show me how to say things simply (often in vain, I'm afraid). I truly wish I could better emulate my son's clear effortless style.

The book's cover was designed by my brother, Lane Hudson. It is now much more visually appealing and easier to read. He also made very helpful suggestions concerning the format of the book's interior layout.

The greatest contribution came from my wife, Bev, who helped in many ways large and small. With surprising enthusiasm, she took up the thankless and painstaking task of proofreading the final draft, usually after having spent many long stressful hours at work. Without her help and encouragement, this book would not exist.

ENDNOTES

ABBREVIATIONS IN ENDNOTES

- BAGD Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 2nd edition revised and augmented by F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979.
- BDB Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs, editors. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.
- EBC *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. E. Gaebelin. 12 Volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976-1995.
- EDT *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Edited by W. A. Elwell. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.
- ISBE *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Edited by G. W. Bromiley. 4 volumes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979-1988.
- JETS *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*.
- Liddell Liddell, Henry G., and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Revised by Henry S. Jones. 10th ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred

Rahlfs. 2 volumes. Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelstalt, 1935, (United Bible Society Edition, 2 volumes in 1) 1979.

- NICNT *New International Commentary of the New Testament*. Edited by F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- NIDNTT *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Edited by C. Brown. 4 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-1978.
- NIDOTTE *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Edited by W. VanGemeren. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
- TDNT *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated and edited by G. W. Bromiley. 10 volumes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976.
- TDOT *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H. J. Fabry. Translated by J. T. Willis. 15 volumes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-2007.
- ZPEB *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Edited by M. C. Tenney. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975.

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“Of course, belief is often controlled by the will; it can even be coerced. The obvious examples are political and religious. But the captive mind is found in subtler form in pure intellectual contexts. One of its strongest motives is the simple hunger for belief itself. Sufferers from this condition find it difficult to tolerate having no opinion for any length of time on a subject that interests them. They may change their opinions easily when there is an alternative that can be adopted without discomfort, but they do not like to be in a condition of suspended judgment.” (Thomas Nagel, *Moral Questions*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p. xi, as quoted by John C. Lennox, *God’s Undertaker - Has Science Buried God?*, Oxford, Lion Hudson, 2007, pp. 37-38.)

NOTE 2

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“However, alternatives cannot always be adopted without discomfort and ... there can be enormous resistance and even antagonism shown to anyone who wishes to follow where the evidence appears to lead.” (Lennox, p. 38). While Lennox is speaking directly to the clash of empirical indications conflicting with a scientist’s own world view, his words also speak to the near universal personal bias against anything that may ‘unsettle’ what was considered ‘settled.’

NOTE 3

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Scripture calls him the “other horn” (Daniel 7), “the prince of the people who is coming” (Dan 9:26), “the man of lawlessness,” “the son of destruction” (2 Thes 2:3), and “the beast” (Revelation 13 & 17). He is also known by the title “Antichrist.” While this title is not specifically given to him in the Bible, it does seem, to sum up his attitude toward the True God and his followers. “Antichrist” is a combination of two

Greek words, ἀντί & Χριστός. The preposition ἀντί carries the meaning of “in place of, instead of” (BAGD, ἀντί, p. 73; see also NIDNTT 3:1179-80). When combined with the term Χριστός, this title means “in place of Christ, instead of Christ.” So, while the Bible does not use this title for him, it does describe the motivations found in his future actions. Since this is how he is popularly known, and because the many other actual scriptural titles are less known, the title “Antichrist” will be used in this book for this final human antagonist.

NOTE 4

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“The identification of this kingdom as Rome can hardly be questioned except by those whose presuppositions do not permit them to believe in the possibility of predictive prophecy. Rome did not enter the scene of Palestine as a crushing force until 63 B.C., when the Roman general Pompey captured Jerusalem. Since the book of Daniel had to be written long before that date, we are locked into the realm of predictive prophecy as we contemplate these astonishing words.” (John C. Whitcomb, *Everyman’s Bible Commentary - Daniel*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1985, p. 96).

NOTE 5

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It is crucial that the reader recognize the descriptive commonalities shared by the 4th beast of Daniel 7, the beast of Rev 13:1-10, and the beast of Revelation 17. Attempting to identify the beast apart from the common elements shared among these 3 passages puts the interpreter at a serious disadvantage. Failing to account for these common elements in the immediate context of the passages results in omitting contributing aspects the author chose to use, producing an interpretation less likely to carry the full measure of the author’s intended message. Similarly, an attempt to identify any of the constituent parts of the beast using an interpretation not fully

grounded in the shared common features of its context is also less likely to reflect the intended meaning these parts of the beast were meant to reflect.

The three most common interpretations of Rev 17:8-11 are concisely presented by Pentecost. However, the reader should observe that none of these 3 interpretations recognize the context's common elements with Rev 13:1-10 and Daniel 7. More specific interaction with these 3 interpretations will be provided going forward.

“Revelation 17:8-14. Another important passage which deals with the final form of Gentile world power presents several important considerations. (1) John seems to be giving the seat of authority in the end time (Rev 17:9) since Rome is the ‘seven-hilled city.’ (2) The final form of Gentile power resides in an individual called an ‘eighth’ king, who comes into authority over that kingdom ruled by the previous seven (Rev 17:10-11). This eighth is variously interpreted. There is the view of Scott, who writes:

The seven heads of the Beast represent seven successive forms of government from the rise of fourth universal empire on through its history till its end. ‘Five have fallen.’ These are Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Military Tribunes. ‘One is.’ This is the sixth, or imperial form of government set up by Julius Caesar, and under which John was banished to Patmos under Domitian. The previous forms of authority had ceased. ... ‘The other has not yet come.’ Thus, between the dissolution of the empire and its future diabolic reappearance, many centuries have elapsed. ... This is the seventh head. It is the rise of the fallen empire under new conditions as presented in Chap xiii.1. ... ‘And the beast that was and is not, he also is an eighth, and is of the seven.” The gigantic confederation of Rome is here regarded in its essential features as ever the same. He is an ‘eighth.’ [Walter Scott, Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, pp. 351-352.]

Thus, the different forms of government are here in view. A second view is the view that these seven are seven historical

Roman emperors, five of whom have already died, one under whom John lived, and one that shall come, in whose line the eighth, the beast, will come. [William R. Newell, The Revelation, p. 271]. A third view is the view that these eight represent the eight empires that have had dealings with Israel, all of whom will come to culmination in the Beast. Aldrich writes:

... seven great kingdoms are meant. The belief is that John here goes back farther than the prophecy of Daniel and includes all the great empires that have stood as enemies of God's people. The five kingdoms which have fallen would be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. The sixth was the empire in authority when John wrote. ... The sixth kingdom in Revelation is the Roman Empire and that means that the seventh (with its related eighth head) is just another form or stage of that empire. [Roy L. Aldrich, Facts and Theories of Prophecy, pp.120-121]

Whichever of these views is adopted, it will be evident that the final ruler is the heir to all Gentile authority that previously existed." (J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958, p. 323-324).

These interpretations with their various modifications and other minor interpretations are also discussed by Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, NICNT, edited by F. F. Bruce, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977, pp. 314-317.

NOTE 6

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"The two horns of the ram (representing Media and Persia) were long. The horn that rose later than the other became longer than the other. Media was a powerful kingdom before Persia became powerful; however, after they formed their partnership kingdom, Persia dominated Media." (Renald E. Showers, *The Most High God*, Bellmawr, NJ: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1982, p. 97).

NOTE 7

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“As soon as the goat became exceedingly powerful, the large horn between its eyes was broken. Four other horns rose up to replace it. Greece had hardly reached the peak of its power when Alexander the Great died at age thirty-two (323 B.C.). Four of his generals divided his kingdom among themselves. Ptolemy took Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus, Palestine and several cities on the coast of Asia Minor. Seleucus possessed Syria, Babylonia, southern Asia Minor and the Iranian Plateau. Lysimachus controlled Thrace and Western Asia Minor. Cassander ruled Macedonia and Greece proper.” (Showers, p. 99).

NOTE 8

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One might object to the direct comparisons of the prophetic images from the Old Testament passage of Daniel 8 with the New Testament passages of Revelation 13 & 17. The objection would most likely involve a supposed violation of each passage’s contextual force upon the intended meaning of its prophetic image. When one, with these legitimate concerns, observes that the context is separated by original languages, Old vs. New Testament, past empires vs. future empires, these concerns must be addressed.

First, while the passages are separated by languages and historical periods of revelation, both passages involve the same apocalyptic genre. The imagery in both passages is nearly identical within this same genre. Second, the context of both passages involves the structure of an empire’s power. Third, the images in Daniel 8 are explained by the angel Gabriel. The image of the beast in Revelation 17 also receives attention by an angel. So, while there are differences in language and original historical settings, there are nevertheless extraordinary similarities between these two passages. Such similarities can lead the reader to reasonably conclude that the

intended meaning of the image of beasts with multiple heads and horns in Daniel 7 & 8, explained by the angel Gabriel, conveys the same basic intended meaning as the image of a beast with multiple heads and horns in Revelation 17, also explained by an angel. The original concern over different literary contexts and their implications is addressed adequately by the remarkable 'sameness' of the prophetic images used to describe the political power structures within empires. The concern over possible violation of the passages' contexts should dissipate as the original contexts are seen to be so very much alike in topic, the person who provides the revelation, and the imagery itself.

NOTE 9

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Hoyt envisions the heads of the beast in Revelation 17 as representing the empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and revived Rome, (Herman A. Hoyt, *The End Times*, Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1987, p. 154; cf. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, Wheaton, IL: Bridgepoint, 1993, pp. 93-94). Yet this contradicts the similar prophetic images in Daniel 8 of multi-headed creatures representing a concurrent exercise of power. This Empires interpretation of Revelation 17 also conflicts with the image itself. The image of the 7-headed & 10-horned beast is rooted in the 4th beast or empire from Daniel 7. This 4th empire follows that of Greece. Whatever the heads of this beast represent, they represent an aspect of only that 4th great empire. Both the 7 heads and the 10 horns represent a yet to arise aspect of Roman rule.

NOTE 10

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“‘But,’ some will say, ‘isn’t the language of prophecy full of symbols? And doesn’t this fact make it practically impossible for us to understand prophecy?’ The answer to these questions is found in the

basic relationship between communication and language. Language is God's gift to man. God planned it so that language would be fully capable of communicating to man all that God wanted to say. In the Bible, God communicates his message to us in language that conveys truth. In other words, God is revealing things to us in the Bible, not hiding things from us. This is true of the prophetic portions as well as other passages, ... But what about Revelation? It is full of symbols, and it plays a large part in a study of prophecy. Can we interpret it literally? The answer must be yes, for we must interpret it in the same manner as we interpret the rest of the Bible. If it uses symbols and figures of speech, they must convey literal truth in order to have meaning. ... Use of the symbol heightens the literal meaning of our statement. To be sure, there may be times when we do not understand the meaning of a symbol or even of a plain statement. In such cases we should not devise a symbolic interpretation, rather, we should continue to search for the literal truth that God is trying to convey through the statement. Straight forward, plain, normal literal interpretation is the most basic of all guidelines for the study of prophecy. A second ground rule for interpreting prophecy is this: compare one prophecy with another. This principle was stated by Peter: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). In other words, no prophecy is to be interpreted by itself, but in the light of all that God has spoken on the subject. Every prophecy is part of the total picture. No single prophet received the entire picture; rather, the plan unfolds piece by piece, without contradiction, to reveal the complete and perfect picture. If difficulties of interpretation arise, they are not contradictions, for the Bible is a harmonious and consistent whole." (Charles C. Ryrie, *The Final Countdown*, Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1982, pp. 16-18).

NOTE 11

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Columbia History of the World, edited by John A. Garraty and Peter Gay, New York: Harper & Row, 1972, pp. 206 & 220; ZPEB. "Titus,"

5:759-760.

NOTE 12

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“Prophecy foresees in the end time a Gentile world power which will in some sense be a continuation of the old Roman Empire, but in a form represented by ten kings, or a ten-kingdom confederacy.” (James L. Boyer, *Prophecy: Things to Come*, Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1973, p. 118).

NOTE 13

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Among those who regard Daniel 7 and 9 as containing some prophetic events that are yet to be fulfilled, there is general agreement that a dominate Gentile power will arise in the end times through which these events will find fulfillment. However, not all agree that the center of that future power will be Rome. Hoyt believes the center of that power will be the actual city of Babylon.

“The final city of prominence in world empire will be the city of Babylon. It is the capital city where the king of the world will finally center his government.” (Hoyt, p. 154).

While not taking a position on where the final center of Gentile world power will be located, Blaising and Bock also do not see Rome as this center. In commenting upon Rev 17:9-10, they address the difficult task of reconciling Revelation’s clear references from the Old Testament that prophesied the destruction of ancient Babylon with other Old Testament passages that clearly speak of Roman power.

“Those who associate the image with Babylon are right in that it is the greatest Old Testament picture of such a power. That is why the beast is called Babylon. Those who associate it with Rome are right because Rome was the current manifestation of that beast in the time of John the writer. And yet the beast’s imagery reminds

us that its real existence is from long ago. So Rome and Babylon both apply, and yet the beast is more than either national identification. But neither Rome nor Babylon is likely to be the final location of this world wide opposition, given the shifting nature of location of the eras represented by the heads of the beast. The text is both specific and indefinite at the same time. It describes what the beast is specifically, not where it will ultimately reside.” (Blaising & Bock, p. 95).

It is interesting to note that Hoyt, Blaising, and Bock reject the likelihood of Rome as the location of the final world Gentile power, and that all three also hold to the interpretation that the heads of the Beast in Revelation 17 (and presumably Revelation 13) represent past biblical empires.

“The seven heads of the beast chart the course of empire throughout the centuries. ... The seven heads or mountains mark the movement of great governments. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece are five that are fallen. The Roman Empire is the one during which John writes. Revived Rome is the seventh. The king of the seventh ... will be the eighth but belongs to the seven.” (Hoyt, pp. 153-154).

The interpretation of the 7 heads as viewed by Blaising and Bock follows the same pattern.

“The beast in Revelation 17 is composed of seven heads representing various kingships (or national dynasties in all likelihood). The representative imagery characteristic of Revelation is clearly present. No nation is the beast, especially a multiheaded one. The interpretation tells us that five heads have fallen, one is, and one is to come for a short time. Then comes an eighth figure related to, but distinct from, the seventh. ... We would suggest that this image refers to the sweep of history. The beast depicts each worldwide dynasty of biblical times: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persian and Greece are the five fallen kings. The sixth, Rome, is “the one that is” thus honoring the allusion to the seven hills in Revelation 17:9. The seventh, the one to come for a short time, may well be from a region unidentified in

the text, as is also the eighth king, the beast.” (Blaising & Bock, p. 94).

Since Hoyt, Blaising, and Bock view the heads as representative of past empires, and not as contemporary elements of the beast, their interpretation is not bound to the same historical restrictions that bear upon the interpretation outlined in Chapter One. Viewing the 7 heads as aspects of the revived Roman rule precludes the interpreter from easily rejecting Rome. The literary connections from Revelation 17 to Daniel 7, and the yet to be examined elegant literary patterns which exert considerable contextual force upon Rev 17:11 cause the interpretation followed in this book to regard Rome as still the most likely, given the implied contemporary aspects.

NOTE 14

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McClain also sees that the prophecy of Dan 9:24-27 requires a break in the flow of its fulfillment. “Such a gap in time before the Seventieth Week is implied by the most natural reading of the prophecy. This seems so clear to me today that it is hard to understand how along with many others I could have missed the point so long. ... But let the student now read carefully the analysis of the ‘weeks’ in verses 25-27, ... and notice the order of events. First, in verse 25 we have a period of Sixty-nine Weeks ending with a definite historical event, the appearance of Messiah the Prince. Then, after these Sixty-nine Weeks come two other events, the death of Messiah and the destruction of the city. And after these two events, we come to the final one week in verse 27. If we follow the order of the record strictly, both the death of Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem are placed between the Sixty-ninth and Seventieth Weeks of prophecy” (Alva J. McClain, *Daniel’s Prophecy of the 70 Weeks*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969, pp. 33-34, cf. pp 34-45).

NOTE 15

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The final phrase of verse 24 “and to anoint the most holy” might also be a reference to the Messiah as he is finally anointed king note “to bring in everlasting righteousness.”

NOTE 16

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McClain holds that “the prince who is to come” is the antecedent of the pronoun in Dan 9:27. “... our first problem is to identify the antecedent of the pronoun ‘he,’ for this person is the chief actor and subject of the verse. Does the ‘he’ refer back to the Messianic prince or to the Roman prince? Grammatically, it might refer to either, although presumption favors the latter because he is mentioned last before the pronoun. ... The one who makes the seven-year covenant is the Roman Prince, the one ‘that shall come.’ It is he, not the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the subject of verse 27 [in Daniel 9] and the chief actor in the terrible events of its seven-year period.” (McClain, pp. 51-52).

NOTE 17

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Some feel the Antichrist must be the head of the governing apparatus to bring the 7-year covenant into being. Boyer sees the Antichrist as the ruling prince of Roman power when he established the firm covenant.

“The language which follows [Dan 7:8] makes it clear that the Antichrist quickly becomes the real head of the ten-power confederacy, which will be the form of this revived Roman Empire (Rev 17:12-13). As the prince of the Roman people he enters into a seven-year covenant, or treaty, with the Jewish nation in Palestine.” (Boyer, p. 74).

Ryrie correctly identifies the initiating event of the final 7 years as the

establishment of the 7-year covenant with the many by “the prince who is to come.” However, he also sees this prince as already the leader of the confederation.

“The Tribulation actually begins with the signing of a covenant between the leader of the ‘Federated States of Europe’ and the Jewish people.” (Ryrie, p. 91)

It is accurate to say that the treaty is established by “the prince of the people who is to come.” This coming prince is connected to the revived Roman system. However, he need not be the ruler of the confederation at the time the covenant is established. Delegated authority or self-directed diplomatic initiatives also could account for his successful establishment of the covenant.

NOTE 18

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The Hebrew verb translated as “he makes” is גָּבַר and denotes strength and power as well as superiority and excellence (cf. TDOT, 2:367-8, גָּבַר). This verb is found in the hiphel stem in Dan 9:27. “The use of the hi[phel] implies forcing an agreement by means of superior strength” (NIDOTTE, 1:809, גָּבַר).

NOTE 19

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K. F. Keil, *Daniel*. Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, by K. F. Keil and F. Delizsch, tr. J. Martin et al., 25 vols. Edinburgh, 1857/1878; repr. 10 vols., Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973, p. 366.

NOTE 20

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Showers, p. 132.

NOTE 21

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Only those in Judea are told to flee, but not those in Galilee or Samaria. Will the former regions of Galilee and Samaria become ethnically or religiously different from Judea in the future?

NOTE 22

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While history does record a desecration of the temple by the Syrian ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanies (Dan 11:21-35), this event occurs well before the destruction of the 2nd temple and well before the death of "Messiah the Prince." Further, Antiochus Epiphanies was part of the remnants of the Greek Empire, while the events involving the actual destruction of the temple & Jerusalem as well as the death of the Messiah are connected to known Roman history.

NOTE 23

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"Among Israel's prophets the term often took on an eschatological tenor describing a future climactic day of judgement (the day of the Lord of hosts, Isa 2:12) ... The prophets not only view historical events as ushering in the day of the Lord's visitation, but they look to an ultimate eschatological event. Even for Amos this will be a day of universal judgement (8:8-9; 9:5) when at last salvation and genuine hope will come to Israel ... It may be a divine visitation within history as well as a final visitation that climaxes history." (EDT, "Day of Christ, God, the Lord," p. 295)

NOTE 24

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While the Greek aorist tense also conveys the speaker's view that the type of action is a completed whole or completed event, in addition to providing the time reference of the verb's action (in the indicative mood), the aorist is not used to convey action in the future. Therefore, whether the speaker intends to convey that the outer temple court and Jerusalem itself passed into Gentile control in the speaker's past or in the speaker's present time, either placement of the beginning of Gentile control is not future to the present time of the one speaking to the Apostle John.

NOTE 25

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When does the outer court come under Gentile control? The tense of the verbs appears to offer no help on this point, since the simple aorist designates the act as a whole or complete act when compared with the speaker's own present time. Yet, in this aorist there may be a clue. If the act of giving the outer court was accomplished well before the firm covenant was initiated, perhaps well before any thought was given to creating a separate place for Jewish sacrifices, then this might fit the use of the aorist tense very well. Rather than the verb designating an event that was completed in the past, this aorist could be signaling a condition that existed well back into the past. The giving of the outer court to the Gentiles could very well speak to a condition where the non-Jewish authorities on the temple mount retain their long hold on all but the area designated by the firm covenant for sacrificial worship and a future temple. (While the Greek Present Perfect could also communicate this same condition, this does not exclude the aorist as also being an accurate and legitimate choice of the speaker to say the same thing.) The giving of the outer court in this sense is a prior giving that occurred in the past, possibly as far back as the destruction of the city and the temple after the close of the 69th week of years from Daniel. Whenever the transfer over the area of

the outer court took place, the 'giving' communicated in v. 2 by the aorist would seem to fit very well with the statement of a condition brought about not because of, but left in place by the firm covenant in those areas not otherwise affected by the renewal of Jewish sacrifices.

NOTE 26

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Also, the parallel circumstances shared between Rev 12:6 (1260 days) with 12:14 ("a time and times and half a time") and Rev 11:2b ("42 months") with Rev 11:2-3 (1260 days), and even Dan 12:11 (1290 days) with Dan 12:12 (1335 days), demonstrate that the different expressions totaling nearly 3 ½ years do not refer to separate periods of time, but are used to express the same basic time period. While some are slightly longer than others, they cover the same basic period of time.

NOTE 27

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BDB, חִבְרָה, p. 1092. Cf. NIDOTTE, 2:16-18, חִבְרָה; TDOT, 4:193-197, חִבְרָה.

NOTE 28

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"Thus, this final king, contemporary with the ten, not only arises after the first ten (thus the title, "a little one," 7:8) but finally, through his sudden and spectacular conquests of three of the ten (cf. 7:8, 20), looms "larger in appearance than its associates" (7:20) and thus becomes amazingly "different from the previous ones." (Whitcomb, p. 102).

NOTE 29

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“The ὥς corresponds to the Hebrew וְ and goes with the veiled and visionary language.” (TDNT, σφάζω, 7:934).

NOTE 30

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BAGD, σφάζω, p. 796.

NOTE 31

[\[Back to text\]](#)

Liddell, φασγάνιον, p. 1918.

NOTE 32

[\[Back to text\]](#)

TDNT, σφάζω, 7:929.

NOTE 33

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Even if the reader has been familiar with end-time scriptural prophecies, it may be startling to learn that some biblical scholars believe that the Antichrist actually dies and is resurrected during the final 7 years. Hoyt sees a death and resurrection for the Antichrist. Pentecost does not agree. Ryrie views it as probable. Whitcomb and Boyer see the Antichrist’s death and resurrection in connection with a military campaign. These positions will be examined later.

NOTE 34

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BAGD, θεραπεύω, p. 359; Liddell, θεραπεία, pp. 792-93.

NOTE 35

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TDNT, μάχαιρα, 4:524.

NOTE 36

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In the last 15 years, Aspect Theory has emerged to question several established elements in the dynamic of the Greek verbal system. While even its most prominent proponents differ in several key areas, Aspect Theory has provided a fresh approach to the meaning of the Greek tenses. It still remains unclear whether it will be able to sustain and prove itself over time. However one views the various forms of Aspect Theory, it must be admitted that its presence has forced careful exegetes to re-examine some foundational concepts of the Greek tenses that were once considered settled. If such re-examination is pursued carefully with rigorous intellectual honesty, whatever the outcome, it should be beneficial. It is good from time to time to test foundational assumptions for soundness. Refinement, if needed, leads to an understanding that more closely approaches the divinely intended meaning. For a concise overview of Aspect Theory see Robert E. Picirilli, "The Meaning of the Tenses in New Testament Greek: Where are We?" JETS 48 (2005), pp. 533-556. For a concise classical view of Greek tenses see A. T. Robertson and W. Hersey Davis, *A New Shorter Grammar of the Greek Testament*, 10th edition, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977, pp. 293-305.

NOTE 37

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The reader is able to observe how the aorist usage here conveys primarily the event type action of the verb “to live” and only secondarily indicates a past time nature of the event.

NOTE 38

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Pentecost does not see an actual death and resurrection for the Antichrist.

“Will the Beast be a resurrected individual? On the basis of Revelation 13:3 and 17:8 many expositors have held that the Beast who will rule will gain a tremendous following because he has experienced death and resurrection at the hands of Satan. Some have held that the Beast will be the reincarnation of Nero. Others have insisted that he will be Judas restored to life. Some have insisted that this will be a resurrected individual without attempting to identify him. The question arises then as to whether this is a resurrected individual in whom the miracle of Christ’s death and resurrection is imitated. Even though it is said that this one comes to power by satanic activity (Rev. 13:2), and is said to have a deadly wound that was healed (Rev 13:3), and comes out of the abyss (Rev. 17:8) it seems best not to understand this as death and resurrection for several reasons. (1) In Revelation 13:3 and 17:8 the beast is explained as the composite kingdom. The reference to the healing seems to be the resurgence of power in the Gentile kingdom that had been dead for so long. (2) Satan is called the “angel of the bottomless pit” or the “abyss” in Revelation 9:11, so that Revelation 17:8 does not teach that the head of the empire arose out of the abyss, but rather that the empire itself was brought about “from the abyss” or by Satan. (3) The Scriptures reveal that men are brought out of the grave by the voice of the Son of God. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection

of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [John 5:28-29]. Satan does not have the power to give life. Since Christ alone has the power of resurrection, Satan could not bring one back to life. (4) The wicked are not resurrected until the Great White Throne (Rev 20:11-15). If a wicked one were resurrected at this point it would set aside God's divinely ordained program of resurrection. (5) Since all the references to this individual present him as a man, not as a supernatural being, it seems impossible to hold that he is a resurrected individual. It would be concluded that the Beast will not be a resurrected individual" (Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 335-336).

Pentecost cites common objections to the Antichrist's resurrection. Several of his points deserve comment. (1) In Rev 13:3, it is not the kingdom that is said to have the fatal wound. Only one of the seven heads is fatally wounded. As the reader has observed, the consistent use of the prophetic symbol of horns and heads involves regional elements of power or individual leaders within a governing empire. Thus when one of the 7 heads is slain, the interpretation most consistent with the prophetic use of this symbol is to see one of the empire's 7 regional rulers as having a fatal wound, not the entire empire itself. (2) It is difficult to view Rev 17:8 as referring to the re-emergence of the dormant Roman Empire because of the inherent flow of time in the context of 17:3-11. Appendix Two explores these contextual elements and their contribution to the interpretation of this challenging text. (3) John 5:28-29 portrays Christ calling forth the dead for review and judgment concerning choices made in their earthly lives. Pentecost correctly points out that only Christ has the authority over the passage from death to life (cf. Rev 1:15). The Antichrist could only be resurrected back to life from death through the permission of Christ. In order to test those dwelling on the earth in this end-time, Christ's purposes may be accomplished by allowing a false messiah to be raised from the dead, in order to test the faith and hearts of the those dwelling upon the earth. (4) Pentecost correctly identifies the Great White Throne as the time of the resurrection for the wicked for judgment. However, while the unregenerate dead are raised at the Great White Throne, this time of judgment does not prevent Christ from allowing a resurrection prior to this time for his

own purposes. Note also that while the unsaved dead are resurrected at the Great White Throne judgment and are then cast into the lake of fire, the Antichrist is cast "alive" into the lake of fire directly upon Christ's return (Rev 19:20), at least 1000 years before the resurrection of the Great White Throne judgment. If the wicked dead are put into a resurrected body before being cast into the lake of fire, the direct removal of the Antichrist into the lake of fire might suggest that his resurrection has already occurred. (5) Pentecost is correct that all the references of the Antichrist present him as only a man. In fact, there are deliberate contrasts made in Revelation between the Eternal Holy Omnipotent God, and the man who falsely claims divinity. Yet, knowing that all men will one day be raised from the dead, either to judgment or to glory, the resurrection of the Antichrist through the permission of Jesus Christ only involves this man's resurrection prior to the time of all the others.

Hoyt does see a death and coming to life again for the Antichrist. "In his qualities for kingship he will exhibit ability to suffer a death stroke and experience some sort of miraculous healing producing wonder ..." (Hoyt, *The End Times*, p. 120). Hoyt sees the Antichrist as the 7th and 8th kings or heads in Rev 17:8-11, yet he still sees a death and coming back to life. "The king of the seventh will die and then come to life again. He will be the eighth but belong to the seven" (Hoyt, p. 154).

Ryrie does not rule out the death and resurrection of the Antichrist.

"Another reason for the beast's greatness involves his being wounded unto death. His deadly wound will be healed (13:3), so that all the world will wonder. The phrase, 'wounded to death,' literally means, 'as having been slain to death,' and it is exactly the same phrase as is used in Revelation 5:6 in reference to the death of Christ. Since Christ actually died, perhaps the beast also will actually die and then be restored to life. He is said to rise out of the abyss (11:7), which seems to confirm the idea that he experiences a resurrection. If not, the text at least means he will have some kind of spectacular restoration so that the world will wonder after him" (Ryrie, p. 102).

Boyer sees a death and resurrection of the Antichrist, but in the

context of battle.

“Here Revelation 13:3 and 14 may have an interesting connection. This passage tells us that the beast (Antichrist) will receive a deadly wound which will be healed, causing all the world to wonder after him. In the original of the passage it seems clear that he actually is killed in battle and miraculously brought back to life. No wonder they will wonder after him!” (Boyer, p. 75)

While not specifying that the Antichrist’s death occurs in battle, Ryrie does foresee a military engagement with Egypt. Ryrie believes that the Antichrist, the ruler of Roman power, will invade Egypt. This will bring about conflict with Russia whom God will supernaturally defeat.

“To review: Before the middle of the Tribulation, the western ruler, Antichrist (the man of sin), keeping his treaty with Israel, will invade and conquer Egypt. At that point the Russian armies from the north will invade and overrun Palestine, and when all appears hopeless for both Antichrist and Israel, God will step in and supernaturally destroy Russia’s northern armies” (Ryrie, p. 109).

Whitcomb holds that the Antichrist is killed and rises from death. “‘And he will speak out against the Most High.’ This is now the second half of the seventieth week of Daniel 9, a forty-two month period, which begins with the Antichrist’s rising from the dead.” (Whitcomb, p. 103). Whitcomb, like Boyer, sees this death and resurrection of the Antichrist as part of a military campaign. “At the middle of the seventieth week, Antichrist will not only be threatened but actually conquered and killed by the great king of the north who may be identified with Gog from Magog (Ezek 38-39).” (Whitcomb, p. 118).

“How does the Antichrist finally attain global authority? The clue comes from Revelation 13 and 17: ‘his fatal wound was healed’ (13:3, 12, 14; cf. 17:8, 11). This thrice repeated statement may presuppose an interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 that sees the Antichrist (‘the king who does as he pleases,’ 11:36-39) killed by the irresistible king of the north, sweeping through countries in his southward thrust into ‘the Beautiful Land.’ The entire passage (Daniel 11:40-45) describing the king of the north thus constitutes

a parenthetical background explanation of the stupendous rise of the Antichrist to world supremacy after both the king of the north and the king of the south are removed as threats to his demonic and blasphemous ambitions (cf. Gen 11:1-9 as a similar parenthetical flashback into Gen 10). The invasion of Palestine by the king of the north probably occurs only a few months before the events of Revelation 13 (and Dan. 11:36-39, 12:1) and provide the background for them.” (Whitcomb, pp. 156-157).

The scenario proposed in this book does not try to determine ‘How’ or ‘Where’ the Antichrist’s death and resurrection will happen. Certainly, the unfolding of events described in Dan 11:36⁴⁵ will be in harmony with any other scriptural prophecies that touch upon those events. However, where the Antichrist is when he is killed, who kills him, and the circumstances of his death are not directly revealed in the Old or New Testament prophecy. Where the Antichrist is when he is resurrected is not revealed either. There are, rather, chronological indications which provide the window of time when his death and resurrection can occur. “When” is addressed in the prophecies of Revelation. “Where” and “How” are not.

The prophetic texts seem more interested in revealing who the person of the Antichrist will be, along with certain identifying features of his rise and exercise of power. Specific details of all his battles and military campaigns are not found in prophecy. For example, the role of military power used or threatened by the Antichrist to subdue 3 other regions in addition to his own is not addressed in the three prophecies of Daniel 7 (unless Dan 11:36-45 is connected to these clashes of armies). The fact that these 3 regions are subdued seems more important than the means by which they happen. The reader should not infer from this that the Antichrist will not make use of military force. He is said to destroy the “great city which is having a kingdom over the kings of the earth” (Rev 17:18). Christ warned those living in Jerusalem and Judea to flee when they heard the news of the temple being defiled by erecting the Abomination of Desolation (Matt 24:15). The Antichrist will wage war against the saints and overcome them (Dan 7:21, 25; Rev. 13:7, 17:14). These are but a few of the actions which indicate the violent nature of the Antichrist. His rule will not be

peaceful, but blood stained. Yet the details seem less important to the prophets than the fact that they will occur. The means are not regarded as important enough to be specifically addressed.

The reader should also note that outside the area of Israel there is very little historical or prophetic reference concerning military actions. The focus of the historic past or the prophetic future is Israel. Time and again, the narrative and prophetic texts of Scripture ignore the mightiest kingdoms and greatest military battles that do not concern Israel. Only when earthly powers begin to touch the interests of Israel does the Old Testament provide any reference to them. The same is likely to be true of unfulfilled prophecies concerning the end-times. Unless the rise or fall of kingdoms directly affects Israel, it remains outside the interest of the prophet. Daniel 11 involves great movements of forces between the Seleucid kings of the north and the Ptolemaic kings of the south because these military forces are repeatedly marching up and down through the land of Israel. If these military campaigns were occurring elsewhere, it is likely that the Scriptures would never mention them.

The scenario advanced by those who view the death and resurrection of the Antichrist as occurring through the king of the north in Dan 11:40-45 does not directly conflict with the proposed scenario. Neither, however, does the proposed scenario require this other scenario to locate the chronological occurrence of the Antichrist's death and resurrection. If the Antichrist is killed by forces in the area of Palestine, the proposed scenario only requires this death to occur after the beginning of the 6th rotation of the supreme executive, and that the resurrection of the Antichrist occurs after the 7th ruler begins to exercise governing authority.

A military campaign at or near the middle of the final 7-year period does not seem to contain elements in conflict with the proposed scenario. The means and conditions by which the 6th supreme executive is killed are not part of the proposed scenario, which is purposefully limited to the direct statements and the local contexts of the 6 references of the Antichrist's death and resurrection in Revelation.

NOTE 39

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There is a potential textual question with the verb in line four of 17:8a, translated as “he goes.” A few of the older manuscripts present the verb in the form of an infinitive that would be translated as “to go” - ὑπάγειν. However, given the obvious intention of the heavenly speaker to present other lines as verbatim between vs. 8 & 11, the form of the verb in the indicative should be preferred over the infinitival form. Therefore, “he goes” - ὑπάγει is preferred.

NOTE 40

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The second line, although containing the same beginning and ending Greek words as those in the two compound phrases, cannot be considered part of line 3 because its existence indicator is negative, the opposite of both phrases that make up the third line.

NOTE 41

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When we look at the structure of the 4th beast in Daniel 7, it begins with 10 kings exercising authority at the same time. At a later time, the “other horn” comes up among them. At some point this other horn arrives and uproots 3 of the original 10 horns. Before he does so he is smaller than the others, but he is larger than the remaining horns afterwards. Yet there is no direct discussion in Daniel 7 of any sequential nature to the authority of this 4th beast. We find out about this aspect of its self-governing from Rev 17:10.

The structure of the 4th beast as it is represented 3 times in the vision of Daniel 7 is when there are 10 kings ruling together. It is possible, given that there is a dormant phase for this beast, that its post-

dormancy may not initially resemble the structure seen in Daniel 7. What Daniel sees in his vision is the structure then in place when the other horn arrives to uproot 3 rulers. It may be that there are aspects of a post-dormancy that are not presented to the reader because at that time nothing climatic happens between the beast and Daniel's people.

We can also assume that the rotations are not likely to begin until the structure of 10 kingdoms is formed. For example, even if a proto-confederation with a different number of kings and kingdoms was found, in which those kings also rotated through some proto-executive authority, this would still be a different scheme than the 10 joining themselves and rotating through the central authority. So, it is likely that the rotational aspect of the beast's governing structure does not arrive prior to the 10 kingdom structure.

It would also seem somewhat odd for the rotational nature to begin much later than when the 10 kingdoms first join together. The necessary central coordinating aspect offered by this rotating office seems essential for harmony among so many joined rulers.

Therefore, while it is possible to see the rotations beginning after the uprooting of the 3 horns in Daniel 7, it is more likely that the rotations begin prior. It would seem less likely that any power sharing would be initiated after the "other horn" takes control of 3 kingdoms. A more defensive posture would be the expected response of the surviving kingdoms. This would put the beginning of the rotations before the 3 kingdoms are uprooted by the other horn, and probably even closer to the origination of the 10 kingdom confederation.

We can assume that the rotational system must be implemented prior to the arrival of the Antichrist as a perceived threat. The Antichrist, represented as the "other horn" in Daniel 7, becomes a noticeable threat at least by the time he uproots 3 of the original 10 kings and places their authority in himself. Although it would seem that the uprooting must occur after the rotations begin, there must be at least 5 regions who have not completed their rotations as the supreme executive when it occurs. According to our understanding of the rotations and of the Antichrist's position as the 6th in order from Rev

17:10, we can also place this uprooting at some point before the last 5 of the 10 rotations could be completed: The Antichrist's own 6th region, the region of the 7th ruler, and the 3 regions uprooted by the Antichrist.

While the action of uprooting 3 kings signals to us that the rotations must have begun prior, it also demonstrates that they are not yet halfway through the 10 regions. (All of this, of course, assumes that the uprooting occurs during the first pass of rotations through the 10 kingdoms. It is conceivable that there were other passes in which all 10 regions were represented, which then began over again after the 10th region rotated through the executive position.)

We do not know how much time elapses from the 1st rotation until the end of the 7th. Therefore, we cannot know for sure how long they are, when they begin, or even if their beginning correlates with other prophetic events.

We know how many rulers will rotate through the office; we know how long the last ruler will exercise authority. So, we know how many rulers and when it will all end. But we do not know with certainty when the rotations begin. Lacking this information means we do not know with a reasonable amount of certainty how long each ruler will exercise authority. This precludes us from knowing whether the first 7 rulers rotate through the supreme executive within the first half of the 70th week of Dan 9:27.

NOTE 42

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While speaking of their interpretation of the beast in Revelation 17, Blaising and Bock make the following comment:

“... that is why the beast is called Babylon.” (Blaising & Bock, p. 95).

This suggests that there is no real distinction between the beast and Babylon the Great. However, the text never calls the beast “Babylon.” That Old Testament allusion is reserved for the harlot who sits upon

the 7-headed & 10-horned beast. The blurring of the separateness of the beast and Babylon the Great is an understandable misinterpretation that is not isolated to just a few. The close associations of multiple complex prophetic images in this passage are dizzying, as Blaising and Bock also acknowledge:

“We admit that the imagery here is difficult, but the goal of interpretation is to be as faithful as possible to imagery in its context.” (Blaising & Bock, p. 96).

However, the fact that the beast destroys the harlot (Rev 17:16) demonstrates that although for a time the beast maintains a close alliance with the harlot, and although their common interests may cause them to work in tandem at times, they are still separate entities and arise from separate roots.

NOTE 43

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The Greek ὄρος may refer to either “hill” or “mountain,” and even “wilderness” or “desert” in some cases. (Liddell, ὄρος, p. 1255).

NOTE 44

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“There is little doubt that a first century reader would understand this reference in any way other than as a reference to Rome, the city built upon seven hills. Rome began as a network of seven hill settlements on the left bank of the Tiber, and was from the time of Servius Tullius (her sixth king) an *urbs septicollis*. The reference is common place among Roman authors. Vergin, *Aen.* vi.782; Martial iv.64; Cicero, *Att.* vi.5; and many others.” (Mounce, p. 31314 & footnote 24). “Rome was built upon seven hills - The Capitoline, Palatine, Aventine, Caelian, Esquiline, Viminal, and Quirinal. Eventually it expanded onto other hills, including the Pincio and Janiculum.” (ISBE, “Rome,” 4:228).

NOTE 45

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Not everyone sees Rev 17:9b-10 or 17:18 as representing the city of Rome. Some hold this position because they understand the 7 heads of the beast as representing successive empires. As such, the past empire of Rome as the 6th head would be replaced by the new power base of Rome's revived form which would be the 7th head. Blaising & Bock illustrate how holding to the Empire's view influences their interpretation of Rev 17:9-10 & 18. In the second of two points raised to support their interpretation of the beast in Revelation 17 they write:

"Those who associate the image with Babylon are right in that it is the greatest Old Testament picture of such a power. That is why the beast is called Babylon. Those who associate it with Rome are right because Rome was the current manifestation of that beast in the time of John the writer. And yet the beast's imagery reminds us that its real existence is from long ago. So Rome and Babylon both apply, and yet the beast is more than either national identification. But neither Rome nor Babylon is likely to be the final location of this worldwide opposition, given the shifting nature of the location of the eras represented by the heads of the beast. The text is both specific and indefinite at the same time. It describes what the beast is specifically, not where it will ultimately reside." (Blaising & Bock, p. 95)

However, locating the 7-headed form of the beast in Rome is supported not only in the text of Revelation 17, but also in the text of Daniel 7 & 9. The continuity of the imagery between Daniel and Revelation is very strong. The image in Daniel chapter 7 of a 10horned beast in which 3 horns are removed, is tied three times in the text to the 4th worldwide empire to have dominance over Daniel's people. Since Daniel 2 & 8 give the reader the identity of the 1st through 3rd empires, the identity of the 4th terrible empire is discernable to the reader as Rome. The image of the beast in Daniel 7 has many lines of continuity with the image of the beast in Revelation.

Included in Blaising & Bock's comments is the misidentification of the beast as Babylon. The immediate and local contexts demonstrate that they are separate entities. Concerning Babylon the Great, the text is really not "indefinite" but rather more accurately addresses different aspects of her composition, nature, and motivation through the use of different Old Testament allusions and quotations.

NOTE 46

[\[Back to text\]](#)

TDNT, πόρνη, 6:579-95; NIDNTT, πορνεύω, 1:497-501.

NOTE 47

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TDOT, 4:99-104 זִנָּה; NIDOTTE, 1:1122-5 זִנָּה.

NOTE 48

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"Ritual re-enactment of the conflict and resolution of the fertility myth, involving sexual intercourse between the king and the high priestess of the fertility goddess, occupied a prominent place in the New Year Festival in Mesopotamia and is thought to have occupied in Canaan as well (Ringgren, pp. 163-65). Also characteristic of Canaanite fertility rituals is the association of male and female "holy ones" (cult prostitutes) with the temples and shrines of the fertility deities. By joining in the activities of cultic sexuality, common people could participate in "stockpiling" fertility energy, which ensured the continuing stability of agricultural as well as human and animal productivity. Archeological excavations in Canaanite locations have uncovered temples with chambers where sexual activity took place. ... The influence of the fertility cult was widespread; it was combated fiercely in Israel as alien to the covenant faith (e.g., Hos 1-3)." (Craigie

& Wilson, ISBE, "Religions - Canaanite," 4:100).

NOTE 49

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"The principle reactions of the Hebrews, especially the Major Prophets, were to focus against the insidious influences of the fertility cult. The restriction of priesthood to males stands counter to the whole thrust of ancient Near Eastern religion in which the interaction of male and female principals was an absolute necessity. The rejection of cult prostitution shifted hopes for productivity to the gracious will of Yahweh rather than the manipulation of fertility powers. Confrontation of syncretistic movements to worship Baal alongside Yahweh or to conflate the two was a chief priority of the prophets and led them into conflict with the royal establishment on numerous occasions (e.g., Elijah's conflict with Jezebel and the 400 priests of Baal on Mt. Carmel in 1 K. 18-19). ... The eradication of the open-air fertility shrines was still incomplete at the conclusion of the monarchical period and human sacrifices to Molek continued to plague Israel up to the Exile and beyond. The very vehemence of the prophetic reaction, in both the northern (e.g., Hosea) and southern (e.g., Jeremiah) kingdoms, indicates how strongly the Hebrew population as a whole embraced the appealing and comforting aspects of fertility worship (esp. of Baal). Apart from its appeal at the level of human sexuality, the fertility cult, by virtue of its focus on the fertility of land and beasts, it must always have had an attraction in a society such as ancient Israel where economy was based primarily on agriculture." (Craigie & Wilson, ISBE, "Religions - Canaanite," 4:100-01).

NOTE 50

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B. K. Waltke, ZPEB, "Molech," 4:269-70.

NOTE 51

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Lev 18:21, Deut 12:31, 2 King 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; 23:6, Isa 30:33, Jer 7:31; 19:5.

NOTE 52

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Babylon is called a πόρνη - "Harlot" in the LXX at Isa 47:10, but this seems to be based more on interpretive than textual considerations.

NOTE 53

[\[Back to text\]](#)

"... there is no evidence that Peter was ever in Babylon, or that there was even a church there during the 1st century. Mark and Silvanus are associated with Peter in the letter and there is no tradition that connects either of them with Babylon. According to Josephus (Ant. xviii.9.5-9), the Jews at this time had largely been driven out of Babylon and were confined to neighboring towns, and it seems improbable that Peter would have made that his missionary field." (ISBE, "Babylon in the New Testament," 1:391).

NOTE 54

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"This epistle ends with greetings from 'she who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen.' While this could refer to Peter's wife, one MS and some authorities read 'the church which is at Babylon' (so KJV). This has understandably led to various identifications for this Babylon. Until the Reformation this reference was taken as Rome, it being always assumed that 'Babylon' was the place in which the letter was written. Two early cursives add "*en Rome*" as explanation. There is an ancient tradition that Peter visited Rome, and Mark had been summoned there by Paul (2 Tim 4:11). W. M. Ramsay argues that the epistle is full of Rom. thought (*Church in the Roman Empire*, 286) and with other internal evidence supporting this theory it is that currently held by the majority of scholars. (D. J. Wiseman, ZPEB, "Babylon, NT," 1:448).

NOTE 55

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BAGD, ἔχω, pp. 331-334; Liddell, ἔχω, pp. 749-50.

NOTE 56

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Some may object to this application of the “Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots.” They may object to a multilayered interpretation being attached to this prophetic figure. Blaising and Bock demonstrate the difficulty of interpreting elements in this passage, especially when their descriptions seem to develop from multiple threads coming from divergent originations.

“Another example of this literal/symbolic difficulty is the debate over the identity of Babylon in Revelation 17. This text shows how multilayered the associations are in an apocalyptic passage and how focusing on only one element may limit its understanding. Should one appeal to Jeremiah 51 and take it literally as Babylon rebuilt, so that the center of the world system in the end will be where Iraq is now? Or is it a cipher for a rebuilt Rome as the reference to the seven hills of Revelation 17:9 suggests? Which context helps us identify what is taking place, the Old or the New? Are the two associations in conflict or can they form a unity? Even dispensationalists have not agreed here.” (Blaising & Bock, pp. 93-94)

If the angelic intention in this passage is to more specifically identify the characteristics and elements operative in that future time, might he not have used prophetic references that highlight different overlapping aspects of this “great harlot, Babylon the Great”? What would restrict the angel from more exactly representing that future by overlaying various elements found in different Old Testament images to more fully depict that future and the dynamics driving those future times? Like an artist uses layers of different colored paint to achieve the look and texture he desires, so the angel in Revelation 17 & 18

chooses evocative passages from the Old Testament that illustrate more exactly the future role and nature of his prophetic image. Must the intention of the angel be restricted to an 'either/or' application of his presentation of the future? Can we place such non-textual restrictions upon what we suppose his intention must be?

While the textual allusions serve to better describe the target, we must also remember that not all images and phrases are for the sake of capturing that target's texture. Identifiers in the text permit the more definite recognition of the target. While the harlot is presented to the reader with allusions containing multiple threads from divergent sources, the harlot is also directly identified in the passage as "the great city" (17:18). Even some elements of the harlot that at first seem allusion-istic are themselves identified later within the text. In 17:1 the harlot is said to sit upon "many waters" which is later given a more concrete identification in 17:15 as "people and multitudes and nations and tongues." The obvious difficulty is determining which aspects are allusions bringing texture and color to the target, and which elements are intended to represent more. In Revelation, what parsing that is provided in the passage itself seems to appear near the end rather than the beginning of the relevant text.

NOTE 57

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BAGD, βλασφημέω, pp. 142-3; Liddell, βλασφημέω, pp. 317-18.

NOTE 58

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"The description ['was, and is not, and is about to come ...' - Rev 17:8] is also an intentional antithesis to the One 'who is and who was and who is to come' (1:4, 8; 4:8)" (Mounce, p. 312).

NOTE 59

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From a strictly systematic assignment of the attributes of God, the inability of his being to be affected by the creation may be more recognizable as transcendence. It is important to remember, however, that these attributes are not mutually exclusive. One could describe God's transcendent relationship to the created order as his separateness from the effects of his creation. This separateness brings in the attribute of holiness. As a being completely separate from all effects, the attribute of immutability begins to introduce itself. When we describe God, we divide our understanding into the manageable categories called attributes. They are helpful and necessary, but they are our attempts to describe his own revelation of himself. Consider, for example, how the continual heavenly cry in Rev 4:8-11 involves the interplay of the holiness, omnipotence, and the eternalness of God in the act of creation and in his involvement with his creation. By incorporating these three aspects of God's nature in their declaration, the heavenly creatures sufficiently impress upon the reader that God is wholly unlike anything he has made. We might attempt to do the same by articulating all of God's non-communicable attributes. But since there is overlap in our list of attributes, the use of holiness, omnipotence and eternalness by the heavenly creatures does not incompletely capture God's non-creatureliness.

NOTE 60

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In the early 20th century, science took a large step forward in understanding the interlocking nature of space and time. Spacetime is an integral component of the physical order. As such, since God created the physical universe, he also created time. Time, therefore, is a part of the creation. Since God is not bound by his creation, he cannot be bound by time. Further, beyond being unbound by time, God is separate from it. Since God exists separate from time, then he exists where time does not, just as he did when the creation was not. God in

this sense is timeless.

However, the Scriptures continually reveal God as interacting in the present time of humanity as time progresses. This implies that God, while timeless, nevertheless can and does involve himself with the created order including beings who are locked into the continual procession of time. God's eternity then must include 1) that his being is timeless, and 2) that it does not preclude him from partaking fully in the collective progression of time.

"God is also infinite in relation to time. Time does not apply to him. He was before time began. ... God is the one who always is. He was, he is, he will be. ... God is timeless. ... The fact that God is not bound by time does not mean that he is not conscious of the succession of points of time. He knows what is now occurring in human experience. He is aware that events occur in a particular order. Yet he is equally aware of all points of that order simultaneously." (Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983, pp. 274-5)

NOTE 61

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"The word suggests transcendence of the temporal and is employed in various senses. ... Beyond this the term traditionally has been used by theology and philosophy to designate God's infinity in relation to time - i.e., to designate the divine perfection whereby God transcends temporal limitations of duration and succession and possesses his existence in one indivisible present. ... Biblical theology and philosophy, however, affirmed the unique eternity of God without ruling out the created and conditional reality of the time-space order and its momentous significance. The doctrines of creation, preservation, providence, incarnation, and atonement all involve a strategic role for the world of time and history. ... Finally, the attribute of eternity cannot be disjointed from God's other attributes. The biblical emphasis on divine omniscience supports the view of his supertemporal eternity. If God's knowledge is an inference from a

succession of ideas in the divine mind, he cannot be omniscient. Divine omniscience implies that God knows all things in a single whole, independent of a temporal succession of ideas.” (Carl F. H. Henry, EDT, “Eternity,” pp. 370-372).

NOTE 62

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The Present Attributive Participle.

NOTE 63

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The Imperfect Indicative. The verb εἰμί - “to be” does not exist as a participle in a past tense. So, the imperfect tense is used to indicate the continuous type of action in past time.

NOTE 64

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“ὁ ἦν indic. supplying for a durative past ptc; the fact that the whole “name” is undeclined after ἀπό adds the impression of immutability to that of eternity.” (Max Zerwick and Mary Grossvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981, p. 742).

NOTE 65

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Present Passive Deponent Attributive Participle.

NOTE 66

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“When we leave the realm of the OT and enter that of the NT, two facts stand out. First, God is only seldom described as holy (Jn 17:11; 1 Pet 1:15; Rev 4:8; 6:10) and Christ is only once called holy in the same sense as God (Rev 3:7; cf. 1 Jn 2:20). The concept of holiness in the NT is determined rather by the Holy Spirit, the gift of the new age.” (NIDNTT, ἅγιος, 2:228).

NOTE 67

[\[Back to text\]](#)

Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 4th revised edition, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986, p. 73.

NOTE 68

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“It should be noted at this point that the ‘name’ of God in Biblical usage is of more significance than the use of the word ‘name’ in our modern language. The name of God is more than merely His name; it is the epitome of His character and of His activity. For this reason, God’s reply to Moses is the more significant. ... The Hebrew words, ‘ehyeh ’asher ’ehyeh, might better be translated, ‘I am I who am’; that is, ‘I am the God who exists as a self-conscious, self-determining personal spirit.’ ... But the revelation of God set forth in the third chapter of Exodus does not end with the present tense, ‘I am.’ The record continues. ... ‘This is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations’ (Ex 3:15). God’s name is not only ‘ehyeh, ‘I am,’ but Jahweh, ‘He who continuously is.’ ” (J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962, p. 35)

NOTE 69

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TDNT, εἰμί, 2:398.

NOTE 70

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NIDOTTE, 1:1024-25 ,היה.

NOTE 71

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“ἀπὸ ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος is one of the characteristic solecisms in the Apocalypse, since a genitive construction should follow ἀπὸ ... But it would be a blunder of modern thinking to judge this as a mistake of one who did not know his Greek very well. Here, as often elsewhere, commentators generally acknowledge that the ‘incorrect’ grammar is intentional. ὁ ὢν is probably taken from Exod 3:14, where it occurs twice as an explanation of the divine name Yahweh, and John keeps it in the nominative in order to highlight it as an allusion to Exodus. Furthermore, the full threefold phrase may have become a general title for God in Judaism, and this would have been reason enough for the author to maintain the nominatives.” (G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999, pp 188-9).

NOTE 72

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“Grace and peace proceed from a threefold source. First mentioned is the one ‘who is and who was and who is to come.’ This paraphrase of

the divine name stems from Exodus 3:14-15 and calls attention to the fact that all time is embraced within God's eternal presence. ... John paraphrases the divine name in such a way as to remind his readers that God is eternally existent, without beginning or end. Such a reminder would be especially appropriate at a time when the church stood under the shadow of impending persecution. An uncertain future calls for One who by virtue of his eternal existence exercises sovereign control over the course of history." (Mounce, p. 68).

NOTE 73

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"Unlike their near neighbors and ethnic cousins, the Arabs, certain sections of whom were intellectually tolerant, inquisitive and assimilative, the Jewish people described themselves as 'stiff-necked'. Their scholars borrowed little in the way of secular knowledge from the nations to which they were subject at different times - whether Greeks, Romans, Egyptians or Babylonians. ... The ancient Hebrews, like certain other nations, used their alphabet not only for letters but also for numerals - and this dual function was a serious handicap to their progress in arithmetic and algebra. Like other Semitic alphabets, theirs had 22 letters only (no vowels). They used all of them as numerals and added five more (variants of letters which take on a different form at the end of a word). Lacking the concept of place value, and with no sign for zero, Jewish scholars had serious problems with numbers. Addition and subtraction were relatively simple, but multiplication, division and fractions were so difficult with alphabetic numerals as to be almost impossible. ... The rabbis opposed secular science, regarding it as a pagan invention. ... Number and science were neglected, and ignored, to an amazing extent. ... If written calculations were required, Babylonian, Egyptian or Aramaic numerals and counting methods might be used. ... It was a literate society, but (especially in the higher, more abstract area of intellectual reasoning) scarcely numerate. ... There are few Hebrew records of number import until the 9th century A.D., when the Jewish people came under the influence of Arab scientific renaissance." (John McLeish, *Number:*

The History of Numbers and How They Shape Our Lives, New York: Ballantine Books, 1992, pp. 93-96)

NOTE 74

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Gabriel's stated goals for the 70 weeks must be reached before the end of the 70th week, putting the fulfillment in the still distant future. After previewing each of the six achievements that would come at the end of the 70 - 7's, Archer concludes that the text means this expression to equal 490 years. For him, the major interpretational question revolves around the continuity of the 70th week.

"The reason for our detailed discussion of the six goals of v. 24 is that the *terminus ad quem* of the seventy weeks must be established before the question of the seventieth week can be properly handled. If all six goals were in fact attained by the crucifixion of Christ and the establishment of the early Church seven years after his death, then it might be fair to assume that the entire 490 years of the seventy weeks were to be understood as running consecutively and coming to a close in A.D. 37. But since all or most of the six goals seem to be as yet unfulfilled, it follows that if the seventieth week finds fulfillment at all, it must be identified as the last seven years before Christ's return to earth as millennial King." (Gleason Archer, "Daniel," EBC. 7:113)

NOTE 75

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Some might suggest that parallelism is at work in this verse, and that this explains how the two components might actually be the same. However, even if Christ's words may resemble a parallel strophe, such an observation would not really offer support. Any parallelism in the verse finds easier avenues of explanation if the focus reflects general Gentile activity, rather than the same Gentile activity.

NOTE 76

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Some could think that Christ's handling of Isa 61:1-2a serves as an example of both near and later fulfillment of Luke 21. Yet these two prophetic situations are quite different. Isa 61:1-2 involves a partial fulfillment, an interval, and the completion of the prophecy. Luke 21 has multiple threads of prophecy moving from events prior to Gentile armies surrounding Jerusalem to Christ's return in great glory. Specific prophetic statements within the overall prophecy by Christ establish the continuation of Gentile events once started until the end. Thus, unlike Isa 61:1-2, Luke 21 contains prior through final flows of events along with several statements by Christ that once some of these flows of events begin, they must continue until the end. The interruption between the former and later fulfillment in Isa 61:1-2 seems to have more in common with Dan 9:26-27. In both, part of the prophecy is fulfilled, an interval is unexpectedly encountered, and a still future completion of the fulfillment is expected.

NOTE 77

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Some hold that the motif of "was, is not, and will come" from Rev 17:8a, 8c, & 11 refers to the revival of the Roman Empire and not to the Antichrist. Pentecost is an example.

"The course of this fourth world empire is given in Revelation 17:8. 'The Beast which thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.' 'Was' describes the empire in the period of its impotency. 'Shall ascend out of the abyss' shows the coming form of the empire. 'Goes into perdition' depicts its future destruction." (Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 324).

Also,

“In Revelation 13:3 and 17:8, the beast is explained as the composite kingdom. The reference to healing seems to indicate the resurgence of power in the Gentile kingdom that had been dead for so long. Satan is called the angel of ‘the bottomless pit’ or ‘abyss’ in 9:11. This means that 17:8 does not teach that the head of the empire arose out of the abyss, but rather that the empire itself was brought about ‘from the abyss’ by Satan.” (J. Dwight Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come*, Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990, p. 307).

NOTE 78

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See Craig A. Blaising, “The Future of Israel: As a Theological Question,” JETS 44 (2001), pp 435-50.

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The extraordinary similarities shared between Rev 17:10 and Dan 7:20 even extend to the choice of verbs which mean “to fall.” The verb in Dan 7:20 (נָפַל) has the same general range of meanings as the verb in Rev 17:10 (πίπτω). Interestingly, the LXX uses πίπτω almost exclusively to translate נָפַל (NIDNTT, πίπτω, 1:608-9). So, the choice of verbs demonstrates a remarkable similarity between Rev 17:10 and Dan 7:20. Given this, it seems reasonable to assume there is a similar idea behind the use of these two verbs meaning “to fall.”

Usually, a word’s potential meaning is narrowed down by its context. In the case of Rev 17:10, that context would seem to include Dan 7:20 and its context. Fortunately, Dan 7:20 is one of three verses in the chapter that describe the same event and these other two are very descriptive (7:8, 23).

The three kings were removed from power in such a way that no return could be expected. The vivid metaphor of “*pulled out by the*

roots" (v. 8) clearly implies a permanent removal. The metaphor itself also seems to focus attention on the power of the king and not his life. The life of an individual is easier to remove than pulling out the well-entrenched political and military machinery that sustains power. The vivid metaphor seems overly flamboyant for a political assassination. Nevertheless, the context is not definite on whether the 3 kings were killed, defeated or simply removed from power, possibly because it is irrelevant. The emphasis in Dan 7:8, 20 and 23 is the permanent loss of ruling power. This is what "*fell*" in Dan 7:20 and Rev 17:10.

In ancient times, a king's life and his continued power were one and the same. The situation is very different today. Among an increasing number of nations, power is given to a ruler at the beginning of his term and leaves him at its end. Dan 7:8 & 23 explain that the loss of power is to be permanent for the 3 kings in Dan 7:20. Given the very similar elements shared between Dan 7:20 and Rev 17:10, this is the meaning that should be applied to *πίπτω* - "to fall." The use of the *πίπτω* in Rev 17:10 to refer to the non-existence of the 5 kings should not cause the reader to assume that the kings were 'brought down or defeated.' Nor should the reader assume that they were removed against their will. (BDB, נָפַל , pp. 656, 1103; Liddell, *πίπτω*, pp. 1406-7; BAGD, *πίπτω*, pp. 659-60; NIDNTT, *πίπτω*, 1:608; TDNT, 6:164-167).

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"One must not underestimate the power of longstanding tradition in shaping the hermeneutical preunderstanding by which individual texts as well as whole portions of biblical literature are read preunderstandings which are reinforced by the expositional commentary traditions in evangelical preaching and by traditional forms of theological catechesis in evangelical teaching. We as evangelicals affirm the consistent application of a grammatical historical-literary hermeneutic. ... However, although we are rich in hermeneutical theory, we are poor in its theological implementation. Our tendency in evangelicalism is to rest confessionally on the

theological work of predecessors rather than drawing the faith afresh and ever richer out of the Scripture by the hermeneutical methodologies which we spend so much time developing.” (Blaising, “The Future of Israel,” JETS 44.3, p. 443).